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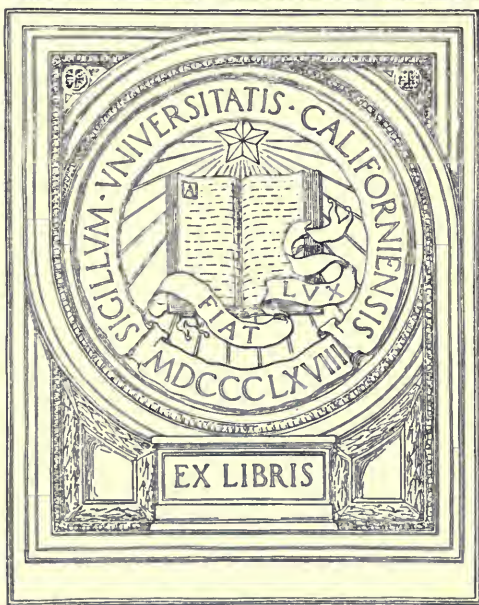
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# GLENBERVIE

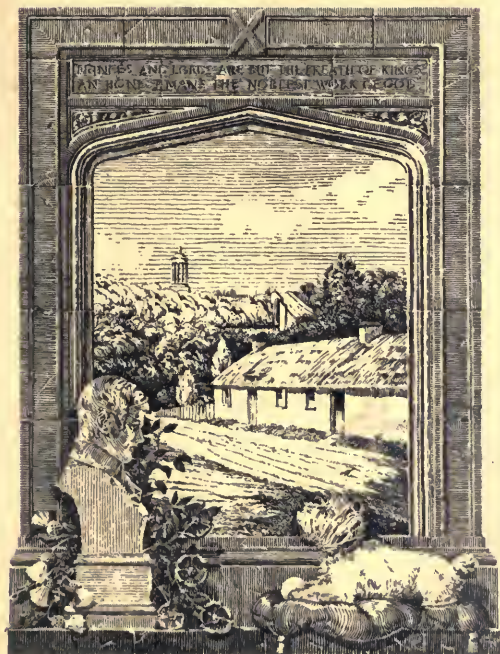


## the FATHERLAND of BURNS, by

Geo. H. Kinnear, Glenbervie.



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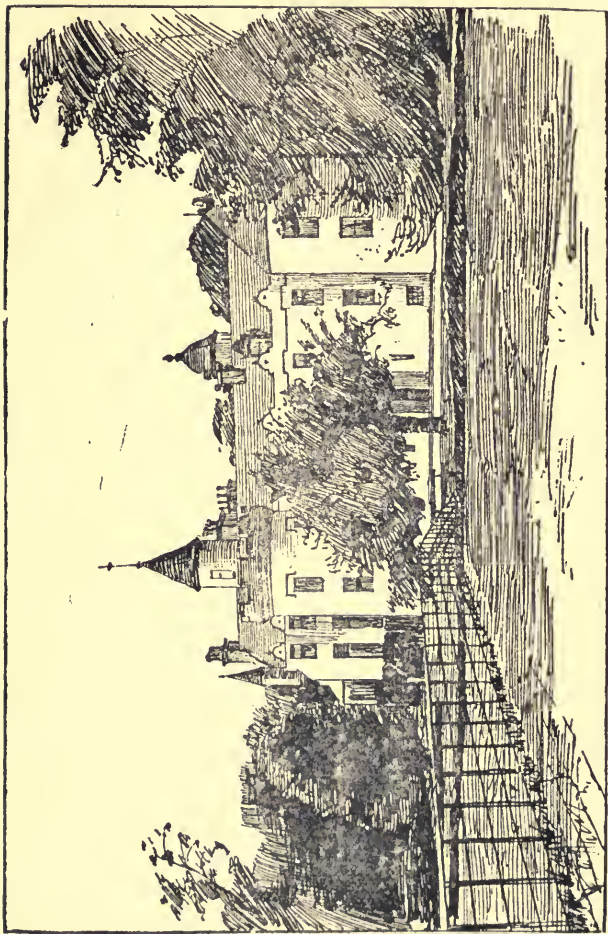
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GLENBERVIE HOUSE.

HISTORY  
OF  
GLENBERVIE.

BY  
G. H. Kinnear, Drumlithie.

MONTROSE:  
PRINTED AT THE "STANDARD" OFFICE.

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1895.



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# Preface.

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THE near approach of the centenary anniversary of the death of Burns suggested to the author of the following pages the desirability of having some account, however meagre and inadequate, of the past and present history of the parish from which sprung the family rendered now world-famous by the genius of the great Bard.

The author, alike from observation, traditionary report, and his own reading, was for a considerable time impressed with the conviction that there was enough of material for a history of the Parish of Glenbervie, either already recorded, or to be got from trustworthy sources, sufficient to make a small volume, having some interest for natives and residents, if not for a larger public.

Besides the very considerable reading and research involved in its preparation, there was necessarily a considerable discrimination to be exercised, not only as to the relative value of whatever came to hand, but also a careful sifting, as to whether it was fact or fiction. The author, therefore, while endeavouring honestly to "prove all things and hold fast to that which is good," trusts that the public will look with an indulgent eye on the many shortcomings and inaccuracies which no doubt will be apparent to many of those who honour him by reading the little work.

The history of the neighbouring parishes of Fordoun and Laureneekirk has been ably dealt with already, but the author, whilst possessing the good sense and humility to recognise their complete superiority in respect of matter and merit with the present work, yet ventures to hope that there may be here and there scattered through these pages something, however small, towards the elucidation or composition of a complete county history.

Amongst the many who have rendered valuable assistance to the author only a few can be mentioned, although grateful thanks are extended to all.



To Mr James Badenach Nicolson and Mrs Nicolson, Glenbervie; the Rev. W. Gordon and Mrs Gordon, The Manse; the Rev. R. M. Boyd, F.C. Manse; the Rev. John Brown, E.C. Manse, Bervie, Clerk to the Presbytery of Fordoun, and many others in the parish and neighbourhood the Author is indebted for much of his information. A special word of thanks is also due to Mr W. Reith, one of the oldest residents in the parish, for many reminiscences of the past.

In the publication of the work valuable counsel and help have been afforded by the editor of the *Montrose Standard*; and to Mr William Watson, of the same office, the author is under a deep obligation for his kindness and help in many ways.

The Burns Chapter has been revised, and in great part rewritten by Mr Edward Pinnington, whose enthusiasm for and extensive knowledge of Burns' matters are a guarantee of the correctness of the matter contained therein. It is almost entirely taken from a series of copyrighted articles published by him, some time ago, in the *Glasgow Evening News* and the *Montrose Standard*, under the title of "Burns in the North." These papers, it is his intention, to republish in book form. The amount of Burns literature nowadays is so vast, and of such easy access that the author did not feel called on to do more in this special chapter than exhibit the salient points of the historical connection of the Burnesses with the parish. The general scope of the work will tend, it is hoped, to show rather the envioning circumstances and conditions of the parish under which many of the Burnesses lived.

In addition to the sources of information already noticed, the following works, among others, have been consulted:—Jervise's "Memorials"; Scott's *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ*; Dr Roger's "Genealogy of Burns"; Fraser's "History of Laurencekirk"; Mollyson's "History of Fordoun"; "The Annals of Fordoun," by Dr Cramond, Cullen; Robertson's Agricultural Survey; The Black Book of Kincardineshire; The Old and New Statistical Accounts of the Parish; The Glenbervie Kirk-Session Records, &c., &c.

The author will be obliged to those who point out to him any errors in matter of fact, so that they may, if necessary, be corrected in future editions.

# History of Glenbervie.

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BY

G. H. KINNEAR, Drumlithie.

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## CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION—NAME OF PARISH—SITUATION—  
EXTENT—DIVISIONS—POPULATION.

Kineardineshire, or as it is commonly called, the Mearns, cannot be said to have been the scene of many of the outstanding events of Scottish history. Hedged in between Aberdeenshire on the north, and Forfarshire or Angus in the south, it stood far removed in the past from those more central districts of the country in which the great struggles for Scottish independence and Scottish religion were being bitterly fought out. But although not perhaps thus so distinguished as a scene of historic action and valour, the achievements of the "Men of the Mearns" in the past will bear comparison in their respective walks of life with almost any other county in Scotland.

"Possessed," says Jervise in his lecture to the Fetterearn Farmers' Club in 1858, "of no more important seminaries of learning than ordinary schools, the county had the honour of giving birth to some men of great literary attainments. John De Fordun, author of the celebrated *Scoti Chronicon*, and the most trustworthy of our Scottish historians, is supposed to have been born at, and to have assumed his name from, the ancient town of Fordoun, about the year 1350. Bishop Wishart of St Andrews and his more celebrated namesake, who suffered martyrdom during the Reformation, are sup-

✓ posed to have been born at the family mansion of Pitarrow. The ancient house of Falconer gave no fewer than three senators to the College of Justice, of whom one was for some time the Lord-President. ✓ Cadets of the Burnetts of Leys and of the Douglasses of Tilquihilly, were Bishops of the see of Salisbury, and the first of them was one of the greatest men of the age in which he lived. ✓ Dr Thomas Reid, the celebrated philosopher, was born in the manse of Strachan, and two of his ancestors, who were respectively eminent as philosophers and physicians in the time of Charles I. were sons of the minister of Banchory - Ternan. ✓ Keith, author of the celebrated *Catalogue of the Scottish Bishops*, was a cadet at the family of Keith, ✓ Marischal, and born at Uras. Douglas, compiler of the *Baronage of Scotland*, was Baronet of Glenbervie. ✓ Bishop Mitchell, of Aberdeen, belonged to Garvock. ✓ Dr John Arbuthnott, the friend of Pope, was born at Kinghorny. ✓ Dr Beattie, the celebrated author of *The Minstrel*, was a native of Laurencekirk." ✓ Lord Monboddo, one of the greatest scholars of his age, and one of the most upright of men, must be added to the list. More names might be adduced to swell the Mearns roll of fame, but enough has been said to show that there is here a record of which the county may well indeed be proud.

It is not our purpose, however, at the present time to speak of the general history of the county, but merely to offer the following pages as a small contribution towards the history of one of the most attractive and interesting of her parishes. There is abundant material in the parish life and parish records of the past for the local historian to make use of, and nothing can indeed be more gratifying than the increasing interest which of late years has sprung up regarding the past annals of our parishes and shires.

Many unwritten legends and traditions there are, as well as the already written records and accounts, which in the present transitional and busy age it is advisable to lay hold of and secure in more permanent form than what the vicissitudes and chances of traditionary lore can afford. Even more than in the past will these be valuable to the future historian. Our rapidly changing customs and modes of living, as well as the exigencies of a highly complex civilization will soon obliterate from view many picturesque incidents and associations which

now invest the different localities with a romantic and enticing charm.

These few introductory remarks will enable us, therefore, to begin a short account of Glenbervie, in the preparation of which the author has laid himself under contribution to every available source of information, both written and traditionary.

#### GLENBERVIE,

as the name implies, takes its name from the river Bervie which flows through it. The parish was formerly known as Overbervie, a name which also carries with it its own meaning.

Many of the names of the parishes in the county have been changed. Laureneekirk was formerly Conveth; St Cyrus was Ecclesgreig; previous to the twelfth century, as documents in the possession of the Arbuthnott family show, the name of the parish of Arbuthnott was not written as now, but Aberbothenothc. In the fourteenth century it had become Aberbuthnott, and about the end of the first half of the fifteenth century Arbuthnott. Marykirk was formerly known as Aberluthnott. or, as expressed in old writings Aberluthnett, whilst the royal burgh of Bervie at the mouth of the river the same name, is still designated in official documents by the appropriate name of Inverbervie.

Glenbervie lies nearly in the centre of the county, and is bounded on the west by the Water of Bervie and the parish of Fordoun; on the east by Dunnottar and Fetteresso parishes; on the south and south-east by Arbuthnott and Kinneff; and on the north by the parishes of Strachan and Durris, the march between them and Glenbervie being on the ridge of the heath-clad slopes of the Grampians. Its length from north to south is  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles and it stretches  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles from east to west, and contains something over thirteen thousand acres.

Besides the principal stream there two others in the parish—the Cowie and the Carron. The Cowie rises in the hills on the north side of the parish, and continues in an easterly direction, until it enters the parish of Fetteresso. The water of Carron flows from the hills of the Brae of Glenbervie, and passes eastward to the valley dividing Fetteresso from Dunnottar—"a water," says the last Statistical Account, "too diminutive to merit that classic name."

## THE BERVIE

rises in the hills to the north-west of the parish, and joins the Bulg burn above the farm of Corsebauld, and after curving round Paldy Hill continues its course till it reaches the Knock Hill and Glenbervie House round which it winds. After a southerly course of a mile or so it receives the Forthie, a small stream which forms the march between Glenbervie and Arbuthnott. Turning eastwards it then leaves the parish at a point south-east from its source. It continues its easterly direction to near Fordoun Station, thence south-east through the the beautifully wooded grounds of Arbuthnott, and finally enters the sea at Bervie.

The banks of the Bervie are in many places very picturesque. Where it comes down from the upper district of the parish its banks are but little wooded, but round Glenbervie House and in the parish of Arbuthnott they are rugged and wooded, the slopes to the river being covered with a rich profusion of wild flowers and fern. It has for long enjoyed a high reputation as a trout fishing stream amongst the disciples of Isaak Walton. Yellow trout are abundant, whilst at certain seasons, in the lower reaches of the river especially, sea trout and grilse afford good sport to the angler. It is to the credit of the various proprietors, through whose ground the river runs that no barrier has been placed in the way of legitimate sport with the rod and line.

The parish, considered topographically, may be divided into

## THREE DISTRICTS.

(1.) That which lies along the side of the Bervie Water. The soil here is, on the whole, productive and comparatively early. "It is," says the last Statistical Account, "diversified by sloping banks and swelling grounds, and though but ill-clothed with wood, and almost destitute of hedge or hedgerow, shelter or screen, is not unpleasing to the view." Since the above was written, this district in common with other parts of the parish has shared in the general improvement which has taken place within the last half century in agricultural methods and practice.

A part of this district which joins Arbuthnott on the southeast is bounded by a sand-bank, commonly known as the *Kames* "rising," says the authority

already quoted, "abruptly from the level on both sides, as if it had been cast up by human art,—though from the regular strata it contains, it has obviously been the effect of some water-course; yet the similar acclivity on both sides might incline one to suppose that some convulsion had aided in throwing up the girdling mound."

2. The *middle* district—separated by a sort of ravine from the Bervie water district. This district again may be divided into an eastern and a western branch. The western division is considerably elevated, and less attractive in appearance than the western. Seventy years ago it was said to be "bleak in appearance, little cultivated, almost neglected." The eastern division is more fertile, and although high and exposed is now in a state of good cultivation.

3. The *northern* district is naturally of a colder and less productive character, lying as it does close to the Grampian range. It has not such an inviting appearance as other parts of the parish, although the advance within the last half century in every respect has been very marked. Parts that were formerly wild and barren moors are being gradually brought under cultivation, and may be expected to produce relatively as good crops as any other district of the parish.

The parish has for long enjoyed an enviable reputation for

#### HEALTHFULNESS.

The natural situation conjoined with bracing breezes from the hills renders it at once salubrious and pleasant. The atmosphere is dry and pure, and though it may not vie with other places in outward attractions and interest, it may safely be commended to the health-seeker as a spot which will in a short time have an invigorating and wholesome effect on his health. "The climate is very cold in winter," says the last Statistical Account, not so much from elevation above the level of the sea, as from proximity to the hills in the background, which are, soon after autumn, capped with snow; and, excepting short intervals of softer temperature, remains so till towards spring. However, from the inland situation of the parish, the heights between intercepting the sea-breeze, the heat of summer is considerably greater than on the coast, or even on the flats of the shore;



hence the crops of these districts, where the soil is not naturally wet and cold, come to maturity fully as soon as those which no frosts have benumbed in their seed-bed, not blasts from the mountain checked in their spring."

According to the last census the population was only 887, One hundred and forty years ago the number of inhabitants was 358—that is a little more than to-day. In 1796 it had risen to 1307; in 1821 it was 1227; in 1831 it was 1248; and now in 1895 it has receded again to 887.

It will be thus seen that for the last quarter of the eighteenth century and well on through the first half of the present century, the population was practically stationary. During a considerable part of that period there was neither inducement nor desire for the inhabitants to leave their native parish, but the "yearly emigration" to other districts, spoken of by the Rev. Mr Drummond in the last Statistical Account, has been very marked during the last half century. Of course this has by no means been confined to Glenbervic. The most superficial observer cannot fail to have noticed the steady and continuous stream of the best of the peasantry into the large towns and cities during the last three or four decades. Our statesmen, irrespective of party, are trying to avert this by making

#### RURAL LIFE AND LABOUR

more attractive to what in a certain sense is, no doubt, the backbone of the nation. It will be, we doubt not, to the benefit of the individual as well as to the community at large that this influx into the towns, and consequent depletion of our rural peasantry, should be considerably arrested. How this is to be done it is for the Legislature to say. Other European nations have given us an object-lesson as to the value of a rural peasantry, and we must wish well to all our legislators, who, by their efforts are able to entice the labourer back again to the soil, and settle him there, for as the poet Goldsmith has said

"A bold peasantry, their country's pride,  
When once destroyed, can never be supplied."

The following analysis of the population one hundred years ago will be interesting. It shows that verging on the "three score and ten" years and over it, there were 158 souls or about 1 in every 8



of the population, a fact bearing testimony to the general longevity of our rural population then, and the healthfulness for which the parish as above stated has been long famed. There were of a population 1307—750 being males, and 557 females—

Under	10	..	277	„
Between	10 and 20	..	244	„
„	20 „ 30	..	228	„
„	30 „ 40	..	193	„
„	40 „ 50	..	115	„
„	50 „ 60	..	92	„
„	60 „ 70	..	100	„
„	70 „ 80	..	46	„
„	80 „ 90	..	9	„
„	90 „ 100	..	3	„
Total,			1307	

## CHAPTER II.

ESTATES IN THE PARISH—GLENBERVIE HOUSE—ITS  
 ANTIQUITY—EDWARD FIRST'S VISIT TO IT—  
 "EDOM OF GORDON'S " RAID.

The principal estates in the parish are—(1) Glenbervie, Mr J. B. Nicolson ; (2) Drumlithie, belonging to the trustees of the late Mr Millar ; (3) Lawgavin, Mr Burnett of Monboddo ; (4) Inehbreek, Mr J. Stuart of Laithers ; (5) Dellavaird, Rev. James Gammell, Drumtochty ; (6) Mergie, Mr Duff of Fetteresso ; (7) Fallside.

(1.) *Glenbervie* is, of course, the principal estate in the parish, and the only one with a residence. It extends to 8481 acres. A survey taken about forty years ago, showed the arable area at that time to have been 2985 acres, the natural pasture, 3850 ; and the woods 116 acres. Since then, however, a large extent has been added to the arable area, while almost 300 acres have been planted. Within the last quarter of a century more than £10,000 has been expended by the proprietor on general agricultural improvements on the estate ; and in addition to this the tenants have also improved the estate by draining, reclamation of moor or waste land, and other works. Advantage was taken at an early period of the Drainage Loan Act, they having previous to 1855 put in about 90 miles of subsoil drains on the Glenbervie estate. Recent improvements have been carried out under private arrangements between the proprietor and individual tenants. Advantage is also taken on the expiry of a lease to carry out improvements of the houses and other desirable works. The five-course rotation has long been the rule on the estate, "but," says one in some recent remarks on the management of the estate, "Mr Nicolson, who is

## A POPULAR AND PAINSTAKING LANDLORD,

has been encouraging his tenantry to grow a greater extent of grass, and devote still more attention to the rearing and feeding of stock. On suitable land and under good management, he allows two successive grain crops to be grown when the tenant desires to have that advantage." The hill portion of Glenbervie, extending to about 2400 acres is fenced in and used as a sheep farm. The soil on the Glenbervie estate varies from good strong fertile clayey-

loam to thin loam lying on a hard pan. The sub-soil on the better parts is gravel and clay.

(2.) *Drumlithie* estate was formerly known as *Kinmonth*, from the fact that there are several farms of that name on the estate. It was purchased about the beginning of the present century from Viscount Arbuthnott by Mr Gordon of Avochie, but was purchased by Mr John Miller, whose trustees now administer it. This estate, like *Glenbervie*, has been considerably improved during the last half century by draining and reclaiming waste or moor. The village of *Drumlithie* is built on this property. It extends to over 1600 acres, and extends southward from the *Lawgaven* and *Brae* district of the parish to its most southerly boundary. This is intersected now both by the great north road and the main line of the *Caledonian Railway*. The land adjacent to the village of *Drumlithie* is divided up into crofts of a few acres, which are eagerly sought for, at considerable rents, by tradesmen and others in the district.

(3.) *Lawgaven* estate, an ancient patrimony of the *Burnetts of Monboddo*, comprehends from 1000 to 1100 acres, of which, perhaps three-fourths are in cultivation. It lies close to the *Grampians*, and extends for about two miles in length, along the base of the hills, being watered by the *Carron*, which has its source near this.

(4.) *Inchbreak* comprehends about 1600 acres, mostly mountain pasture, and at the beginning of the century scarcely one-fifth of the whole was in cultivation. It was on this estate that the ancestors of *Burns* were settled. The names of *Bogjorgon*, *Bogherb*, *Lady's Moss*, *Brawliemoor*, and others in the vicinity are very suggestive as to the original character of the soil.

(5.) *Dellavaird* lies to the north-west of *Glenbervie* House, and extends about two miles to the west. There are 1200 acres or thereby of it in the parish of *Glenbervie*, and it is now in a good state of cultivation. The estate was purchased from the *Earl of Kintore* by *George Harley Drummond, esq.*, and is now possessed by *Rev. James Gammell of Drumtochty Castle*.

(6.) *Mergie* the most northerly of the estates in the parish is upwards of five miles in length, and about a mile broad at an average; and contains about 3600 acres. It belongs to *Mr Duff of Fetteresso*.

(7.) *Fallside*, a small estate in east end of the parish, consists of about 390 acres. It may be considered the terminating point to the Howe of the Mearns on the east.

The most attractive spot in the parish is, without doubt, that round

#### GLENBERVIE HOUSE.

Here the landscape is diversified by wood, river, meadow, and hedge-row. Fine old trees adorn the lawn in front of the house, two large gnarled cedar larches, curiously branched, which came originally from Ireland, being very prominent. The principal entrance to the mansion is flanked on each side by fine old trees whose green towering branches form a natural archway of great beauty. The other approaches to the house as well as to the whole policies are enclosed by beech hedges, well trimmed and kept, which gives them a pleasing and attractive look.

The house itself nestles cosily under the shadow of the Knock Hill, by the side of the Bervie water. From the top of the Knock Hill a magnificent view of the Howe of the Mearns is got as well as the landscape to the north and east. Stretching away to the west and south is the magnificent expanse of the "Howe," with its dark woods and green fields dotted here and there with cosy homesteads. Glancing to the right one sees the tall spire of Fordoun Kirk, and recollects the legend which ran that in a far off age the ecclesiastical authorities intended to build the parish church on the top of the Knock Hill, but having been counselled by some unseen power to desist, they did so, and took it further down the valley.

Tearing along through the valley comes the iron horse which tells of a busy restless age, and of a world "where to live is to brawl and to battle and the strong treads the weak man down." On the left, crowning the top of the hill stands the tower of Johnstone, keeping a silent watch over the restless ocean. Further off one can even discern the peaks of the Sidlaws and the Grampians skirting the valley of Strathmore under which name the Howe is continued even as far as the middle of Perthshire.

On the north and east the view is bounded by the outline of the hills, between which and the spectator lie many comfortable-looking farmhouses and steadings. Looked at in the bright sunshine of an

autumn afternoon, when the heather is in full bloom, the hills present a picture of great radiance and beauty.

Glenbervie House is a very old one, and is supposed to occupy the site of the old "Castle of Glenbervie" to which Edward I. marched, and where he stayed for a night when on his journey north through Scotland to receive the submission of the Scottish chiefs.

Sir William Fraser gives it as his opinion that there must have been a 'castle' as far back as the tenth century, and it is believed that part of the present house formed part of the original one also.

The present house is an elegant and capacious mansion of three storeys high, and was remodelled and enlarged by Mrs Badenach-Nicolson, the present proprietor's mother, in 1854. The house is of an oblong form with a round tower at each angle. That on the south is new, and is surmounted by an extinguisher-shaped roof, with a vane on the top. Above the doorway the family arms are sculptured, the motto on the scroll being "Nil sistere contra."

The full itinerary of Edward I. in 1296 is beside our present purpose, but on March 28 he crossed the Tweed to Coldstream Priory. On June 11th of the same year, Edinburgh Castle had surrendered; a fortnight later he received several submissions at Perth; on July 7th there were further submissions at Farnell and Montrose. John Baliol, one of the aspirants for the Scottish crown surrendered to Edward in the churchyard of Stracathro to the Bishop of Durham and other nobles. Threedayslatertherewere further submissions at Montrose. Edward thereafter directed his course into the Mearns, and on July 11th had reached "Kincardine in Mearns Manor."

This was, of course, the Castle of Kincardine near Fettercairn. It was then the centre of authority in the county. On the following day (the 12th July) he passed into the "mountagne of Glenbervy." By this it is not to be inferred that he encamped among the hills. It merely marks the appearance of the district, as the point of departure from the plain to the hills. On the same day as he reached Glenbervie, several more had given in their submissions at Montrose.

From Glenbervie he went over the hills to "Durriss Manor among the mountains." At Aberdeen he received several submissions, and holding north by

Kintore, Lumphanan, and Elgin, he himself stopped at the last mentioned place. By August 4 he again had reached "Kincardine in the Mearns," but it does not appear that he had again visited Glenbervie on his way south. By August 22nd he had again reached Berwick, almost six months after having passed northwards.

During the troublous times of the latter half of the sixteenth century Glenbervie in common with many other places suffered from the violence of the redoubtable

"EDOM OF GORDON."

During the regency of the Earl of Mar a struggle was carried on in the north as well as in the south. The Regent issued a proclamation that the lieges should meet at the Kirk of Fordoun to attack or resist Sir Adam who was "playing King Herod in the north upon the King's friends and gude subjects." The phrase "playing King Herod" is very expressive, and conveys very forcibly to the mind the character of the work he was then engaged in.

The fencible men of Kincardine were, as stated, called by proclamation to meet the Lord Lieutenant at Fordoun. A few days later than this Sir Adam made an incursion into the Mearns, surprised the Castle of Glenbervie, then belonging to the Douglasses, laid waste his lands, and carried away his goods and chattels. These successes reached the ear of the Regent, and accordingly the Lords of the Privy Council granted a commission to David, Earl of Crawford; Patrick, Lord Lindsay; Robert, Earl of Buchan, and others, "to converve the lieges in warlike manner to resist the treasonable attempts of the said traitor."

### CHAPTER III.

DRUMLITHIE VILLAGE — ITS NAME — INDUSTRIES —  
DESCRIPTION — THE STEEPLE — THE TOWN COUN-  
CIL — THE BOGS.

#### DRUMLITHIE,

the only village in the parish has been in existence for a very long period. It dates back at least to the beginning of the Seventeenth Century. The Kirkton of Glenbervie, which must have stood, as its name implies, near the church, was crected into a Barony in 1326 by the Douglas family, but it has long been lost to memory.

The name Drumlithie is said to mean "the ridge at the end of the valley," and its situation would answer to this description. It stands on a gentle slope at the end of the Howe of the Mearns, from which again there is a slope to the eastward. Another derivation has been ventured upon, for which there is also some warrant. In 'lithie' we have the same word as Leith, which means 'water,' and to this day there is a road with a considerable slope leading northwards from the village to Newmill and the Kinmonth, which is popularly known as 'the watery bawks,' or backs, hence the supposition 'the back of the hill where the water comes down.' In the days before draining was practised, and before there was any road worthy of the name, it is just possible that sufficient water may have come down the hill to justify the name still given to it, but the former appears the more natural and probable derivation of the name.

Formerly the turnpike passed by the village. Hence Drumlithie was one of the places of call for the stage coach in the days before the railway system came into vogue. The present turnpike passes about half a mile to the south of the village. A road from Stonehaven to the village struck off the present one at the Temple, and came along by Fallside to the village. Previous to the formation of the present turnpike the land between it and the old one was one huge swamp, known as the 'Bogs.'

The road leading from the village to the present turnpike and which was the old coach road is generally known as the "Rolland" road, whilst the steep short brae on the other side of the railway leading to the old toll at Mondynes goes by the name of *pays de France*, but no satisfactory explanation of these names can be got. Evidently they are corruptions of something else. There is no tradition or incident in the recollection of even the oldest inhabitant of the district to satisfactorily account for the origin of these names. With the diversion of the main road from the village, and the construction of the railway it was inevitable that its importance as a halting place and centre of trade for the surrounding rural district should be considerably diminished.

The arrival of the stage coach in the olden days was an event of some local importance. It was almost the only means of communication with the outside world. And how very different is it to-day?



Instead of one stage coach arrival we have trains flying past us almost every hour of the day. The outer world is easily reached. That which would have excited the admiration and wonder of our grandfathers is now looked upon as a circumstance of ordinary moment. The important news from all parts of the world, brought now morning and evening to even the remotest village in the land, excites less comment than the burning of a haystack or the overturning of the stage coach would have done sixty years ago. And yet we must rejoice that while the *nil admirari* has been largely developed in our rural population, they have also undoubtedly shared in the general advance in the standard of living and comfort which has marked the last three-quarters of a century amongst us.

If the introduction of steam as a means of communication had the effect of widening the views and sympathies of our rural population, it at the same time inflicted a temporary hardship on many of our local industries. Manual labour must give way to the power of machinery driven by steam, and such was the case in Drumlithie.

One of the chief industries in the village used to be

#### HANDLOOM WEAVING.

✓ The manufacture of linen and other similar goods occupied the attention of the villagers. Nothing but the click of the shuttle and the sound of the blacksmith's hammer could be heard sixty years ago as one went through the village. The sound of the sledge hammer is, indeed, yet heard, but the sound of the shuttle has vanished. The "sough of the shuttle" has not been heard in Drumlithie for almost a score of years. Says Jervise in his Memorials—"A single handloom weaver still (1879) continues to maintain an unequal struggle against the superior power of steam." The weaving shops were not only in the village, but extended considerably to the west end of the village, on the site of the present Deneroft Cottage, which is built on what was then a common for the village, known as the Ba'green, and used as a playground for the children attending the parish school.

From this they extended down to the village, several standing on what is now the schoolhouse

garden. These were low thatched cottages similar to the few still standing in the village, and in many cases served the double purpose of workshop and dwelling-house — the one end forming the loom-shop with its raftered roof and dusty walls in which from morning to night the weaver plied his work.

Whilst no special mention is made of this industry in the first Statistical Account of the parish we find the following remarks on “the manufacturing population” in the second one, written about 1838. “These”—that is the weavers—“have not risen in the same scale as the farmers within the same period”—that is within the previous forty years. “They are dependent, almost to helplessness, on the great manufacturers: In other days, the weaver was the owner of the web he wove; and it was his custom to carry it to market, whence he brought back its value, to purchase more materials for farther operations gratified with the reflection that he had something at stake in the interests of the community, and that his condition was far above that of the mere hireling.” The market town was either Stonehaven or Montrose, whence they were taken by the carrier’s cart.

That the weaving community did not prosper in the same degree as the agricultural class is not to be wondered at, when we remember that these forty years saw the beginnings of the time when steam power was to be the great factor in the mechanical arts, and that whilst the farmer was improving not only his implements but also his system of farming, he at the same time was enjoying the benefit of the high prices which marked the first twenty-five years and more of the present century. Indeed, the condition of both master and servant had improved very much during the period above referred to. “The farmer,” says the second Statistical Account, “though far from opulent, enjoys a moderate share of the comforts of life, and the servant has a fair allowance for the wages of his toil.”

To describe Drumlithie, indeed, would be no easy task. The only regular feature about it is its irregularity. The original founders of the village seem to have set out no plan on which they might proceed to build, or if they did it was more “honoured in the breach than the observance.” A bird’s eye view of it from a balloon would almost convince one

that that the houses had been shaken from the clouds ! It was in reference to this that the late Mr Drummond, parish minister, when asked his opinion regarding the feasibility of a scheme for draining the Bogs, devised by some of the inhabitants said " I thought Drumlithie was a place

#### MADE PERFECT

from the beginning." This remark conveyed by implication a hint that he did not want to be bothered with what did not very much concern him, and at the same time it was a piece of fine sarcastic irony which the minister would, no doubt, enjoy, however agreeable or otherwise it would be to the feelings of the good people of the village.

The most characteristic feature of the architecture of the village is, however,

#### THE STEEPLE.

✓ This unique structure was built in 1777. It consists of a circular tower surmounted by a belfry, on top of which is a vane or weather-cock. It stands in the principal street of the village and was originally intended to hold the bell which was rung for the regulation of the meal hours of the weavers.

The present belfry was the gift of a gentleman who was for a long time postmaster in the village, and who took a hearty interest in its welfare, viz., Robert Dyce Smith. He was for long also "Provost," and in many ways exerted himself for the improvement of the place.

The care of the steeple now rests in the Village Council. This is a Committee of the citizens, who by voluntary subscriptions amongst the inhabitants, are enabled to put up and maintain lamps in the village, to keep the streets in repair, and generally to attend to any other matters tending to the welfare of the place, so far as their limited means will allow. The " Council " is chosen by popular vote at a meeting of subscribers duly called. At these meetings the municipal spirit often strongly asserts itself, and the inevitable " heckling " of the candidates nominated for the honourable position of town councillor, is carried on with great spirit and good humour. In fact, the " heckling " meeting is looked upon as one of the " institutions " of the place. From amongst themselves the Councillors—nine in number—elect a Provost, a first, second, and third Bailie,

a Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, and a Dean of Guild! It will thus be seen that though their means be small, their aims are good, and their aspirations high. A revised set of regulations for the conduct of these local municipal elections was drafted by the Rev. Mr Boyd, at the instance of the Council.

Despite the sarcastic taunt sometimes levelled at them, that the Steeple has "to be taken in on a rainy day," the citizens regard it with as much pride as ever the Egyptians did Cleopatra's Needle, and ask with a pardonable pride where such a combination as a "Council" and a "Steeple" can be found in any place similar to the good old "town" of Drumlithie!

Close to the village are the  
Bogs.

These were a number of low lying and swampy fields, stretching between the old and the present turnpike roads. At one time they extended even as far as the outskirts of the farm of Thriepland, on the south side of the present turnpike. They are now partially reclaimed and intersected by the main line of the Caledonian Railway. They formed at one time a sort of common in which the crofters' cows were allowed to graze on payment of a certain annual rent. For a cow seven shillings and sixpence were paid for the season, and a similar sum for a stirk. These had to be "herded," generally by a boy from the village, his wages being paid proportionally by those employing him. Going to the upper end of the village he blew a horn to give the crofters intimation of his departure with the cows. The cows at the furthest end of the village were simply let loose, and made their own way down to the "fit o' the toon" where joined by the others, they were handed over to the herd boy. Sometimes a hue and cry got up when any of the animals got "laired" in the Bogs, and this necessitated neighbourly assistance, which was by the weavers and others very readily given.

The names of the different parts of the Bogs are very suggestive. They were the Little Meadow, the Muckle Meadow, Big Swale, John Smith's Loch, Fit o' the Parks, Heathery Howe' Links, Foggie Moss, and the Booth Moss, out of which peats were cut. The names indicate very clearly the character of the different divisions into which

they were divided. The herd boy's horn is now in the possession of Mr Thomas Wyllie, tailor, Drum-lithie, who was amongst the last of the herd boys.

#### CHAPTER IV.

THE DOUGLAS VAULT — MELVILLES — BROWNIES' KETTLE LEGEND—THE DOUGLASES—THE BURNETTS—THE NICOLSONS—THE PRESENT LAIRD OF GLENBERVIE.

At the time of the visit of King Edward I the castle of Glenbervie belonged to a branch of the old

#### FAMILY OF MELVILLE.

Many barons of that name did homage to Edward, and among these was "Johannes de Maleuill miles" who probably was "John De Malevill, Chevalier, the laird of Glenbervie. His submission took place at Lumphanan in Aberdeenshire on the 21st of July, 1296; and at the same time and place "John of Stowe," parson of the Kirk of Glenbervie, also submitted.

In the burial vault of the Glenbervie family, standing in Glenbervie Kirkyard, and which formed the chancel end of the old kirk there are two interesting monuments. The inscription on one of these records the brave deeds and matrimonial alliances of the lairds of Glenbervie from 730 A.D., and also describes their connection with the Douglas family. The monument, which seems to have been renewed, bears the date 1680. It contains, in addition to a long list of the lairds and ladies of Glenbervie, some curious mortuary emblems, and also the armorial bearings of the family of Hassa, Olifart, Melville, Affleck and Douglas. The inscription is remarkable in that it perpetuates the name of "Bell-the-Cat," given to the fifth Earl of Angus. He gives us at least a traditional view of the family history, which in its later details is not erroneous.

The inscription is in contracted Latin, and is as follows:—

"Hic jacent, in spe bonae resurrectionis, Glenbervii Comarchi, infra designati, et secundum cognomina singulis classibus divisi, ab anno 730"—  
 "Hugo Hassa, Germanus, illine hue perigrinatus ubi, præclaris meritis postquam insignis apparuisset, Germunda Dervies, Glenbervii heretrice nupta, sub hoc primum tumulo cum conjuge, liberisque suis obdormit. Horum posteri continuerunt in annum

1004.”—“Helena, ultima Hassarum soboles.”—“Duncanus Oliphantes, Mernii Decurio, interfecto Donaldo et Waltero Hassacis, fratribus praedictae Helenae, Clara pugna a campo in Barry expulso Danos, Helenae heretrici nuptus, Glenbervio succedit, gigitque heredem Walterum, filiamque Margaretam, cum agris, nunc Arbuthnott designatis. Ortus inde est Robertus, a presente vice comes, secundus de eodem nomine princeps”—Walterus duxit uxorem Matildam Sinelli angusiae thani filiam. Osbertus, horum filius, Aegidiam Hay, Arrollii filiam, militiae studens, cum Godfredo Bulionio in Syriam perrexit, relieta filia unigenita heretrice, in proelio occisus. Nupta 1057, Jacobo Malvill. Hungaria nobili orto, cui peperit filium Hugonem, matrimonio Gerardi Maependarii, Mernii thani, filiae datum. Horum posterii continuerunt in annum 1440.”—“militi, filio secundo Archibaldi Comitis Angusiae, vulgo *Bell-the-Cat*, Guilelmo Duglasio, a Bredwood, Jacobum patrem heretricis a Glenbervy, nuptae, Elizabetha Malvil, nupta Johanni Affleet, de eodem peperit.”

The translation of the above is—“Here lie in the hope of a happy resurrection, the lairds of Glenbervie mentioned below, and classified according to their surnames from the year 730. Hugh Hassa, a native of Germany, who settled in this country, where his eminent merits raised him to distinction, married Germunda Dervies, heiress of Glenbervie, and was the first that slept in this tomb, where his wife and children repose by his side. Their posterity continued until 1004. “Helena was the last of the Hassa family.” “Duncan Oliphant, sheriff of the Mearns (Donald and Walter Hassa, the brothers of the foresaid Helen, having been killed in a famous battle fought in a plain at Barry, against a host of Danish invaders) having married Helen, the heiress of Glenbervie, succeeded to the property, and begat Walter, his heir, and a daughter named Margaret, on whom he bestowed the lands now called Arbuthnott. From her was descended Robert, the second Viscount from the present, and the first of that name. Walter married Matilda Senelli, daughter of the Thane of Angus. Their son Osbert married Aegidia Hay, daughter of Errol, and being an ardent soldier, went with Godfrey of Bologna to Syria, where he was killed in battle, leaving as his heiress an only daughter who



in 1057 married James Melvil, a Hungarian noble, to whom she bore Hugo, who married Geruarda, daughter of Maepender, Thane of the Mearns. Their posterity continued to the year 1440.”—  
 “Elizabeth Melvil, having married John Affleck of that ilk, bore to him James, father of the heiress of Glenbervie, who married Sir William Douglas of Bredwood, second son of Archibald, Earl of Angus, commonly called Bell-the-Cat.”

In the twelfth century the lands of Glenbervie were in possession of a baron of the name of Melville. This was a very common name in the district at that period. “The Melvilles,” says Jevise, “came to Scotland with King David I., under whom they had a settlement in the Lothians, and their progenitor is said to have borne the name of *Male*, and so called his lands Maleville. Chambers holds that they were of Anglo-Norman lineage, while Crawford asserts, perhaps following the tablet in the burial vault of Glenbervie, that they were from Hungary, where, he adds, some families bear the same name and arms.”

There were

#### TWO BRANCHES

of them, one in Angus and the other in the Mearns. Of the Angus branch were the famous Andrew and James Melville, whose names are so well known as Reformers.

Philip, the founder of the Kineardineshire branch was the son of Galfrid of Melville, who was eminent during the reigns of King David I. and the two succeeding monarchs. About the year 1200 Philip married Eva, daughter of Walter Sibbald, and received with her lands of Monethyn or Mondynes in Fordoun Parish.

His son, also called Philip, was Sheriff of Aberdeen about 1222, and later Sheriff of the Mearns. From him was descended the knight, “John de Maleuil” already mentioned as having done homage to Edward I. at Lumphanan in 1296.

Another of the Melvilles was

#### JOHN, LAIRD OF GLENBERVIE,

who is said to have been Sheriff of Kineardineshire in the time of James I., about 1420. It was he who, tradition states, was boiled in “Brownie’s Kettle” in a hollow on the east side of the parish of Garvock.

The story of the barbarity is well known, yet,



seeing that it was one of the most dramatic incidents in the history of the parish, we offer no apology for here again reproducing the narrative of it. Of late considerable doubts has been thrown on the authenticity of the story, and a wordy warfare ensued, in which on both sides there was a considerable amount of assertion and private opinion with very little argument based on actual fact. We do not intend to decide between the rival disputants, but shall content ourselves with a recital of the narrative from the pen of the Rev. Mr Charles, formerly schoolmaster of Glenbervie, and afterwards minister of Garvock, the parish where the revolting deed is said to have been carried out. Thereafter we shall state as judiciously as we can the *pros* and *cons* of the affair, and leave to an intelligent public as jury to decide for themselves.

“The tradition is this, and affords a sad specimen of the barbarity of the times of James I., about 1420. Melville, the Laird of Glenbervie, and Sheriff of the Mearns, had, by a strict exercise of his authority, rendered himself obnoxious to the surrounding barons who, having teased the King by repeated complaints, against him,—at last in a fit of impatience, the King said to Barclay, laird of Mathers, who had come with another complaint, “Sorrow gin that Sheriff were sodden and supped in brie.”—“As your Majesty pleases” said Barclay and immediately withdrew—went and assembled his neighbours, the Laids of ~~Lanriston~~, Arbuthnott, Pittarrow, and Halkerton—appointed a great hunting match in the Forest of Garvock, to which they kindly invited the devoted Melville. And having privately got ready a large kettle of boiling water in a retired place, they decoyed unsuspecting Melville to the fatal spot, knocked him down, stripped him and threw him into the boiling kettle. And after he was boiled or sodden for some time, they took each a spoonful of the soup. To screen himself from royal justice, Barclay built that fortress in the parish of St Cyrus called the Kaim of Mathers, on a perpendicular and peninsular rock sixty feet above the sea, where, in those days, he lived quite secure. The laird of Arbuthnott claimed and obtained the benefit of the law of the clan Macduff, which, in case of homicide, allowed a pardon to any one within the ninth degree of kindred to Macduff, Thane of Fife, who should flee to his

cross, which then stood near Lindores, on the mareh between Fife and Strathearn, and pay a fine. The pardon is still extant in Arbuthnott House. On the fate of the other conspirators the voice of tradition has died away. The field where this horrid deed happened still retains the name of Brownie's Leys; because from the murderous deed then perpetrated it was long supposed to be haunted by spirits called Brownies."

To the above narrative Dr Cramond, schoolmaster of Cullen, takes exception in certain particulars. His opinions on the subject may be taken as representative of those who disbelieve the tradition as commonly stated. In his "Annals of Fordoun" recently published his verdict on some of the particulars is as follows:—

(1) Was Melville Sheriff?—"improbable, as if there were any likelihood whatever that the lairds of Glenbervie ever were Sheriffs of Kinecardine."

(2) Melville's alleged "harshness to the poor"—"Was it likely," says Cramond, "that that would be accounted much of a sin in those days, and would the neighbouring lairds take vengeance upon him for that offence?"

(3) Repeated complaints to the king.—Says Cramond, "Was it then a king or a Regent?"

(4) King's reply, boiling in cauldron, &c.—"Improbable."

(5) Letter of remission of sentence.—Cramond doubts whether it was ever in existence.

In place of the narrative just given, Cramond quotes the following as "probable in all respects."

"Melville, puffed up with riches and a sense of power, chiefly because he had a great number of Highlanders at his command, bore himself haughtily towards his neighbours, of whom Hugh Arbuthnott, being nearest, suffered most. Not being able to deal with him alone Arbuthnott entered into a league with others of the Kineardineshire notabilities with the result of increasing rather than of allaying irritation. At last a meeting is arranged—a hunting party, Melville being of the number. They fell out on the hill of Garvock and Melville was killed."

The believers in the legend on their part affirm

(1) That such a deed as this was very probable as being in accord with the lawless and barbarous spirit of the time when it happened.

(2) Similar deeds have been carried out. Sir Walter Scott who believed in the tradition, in noticing the death of Lord Soulis, says:—"The tradition regarding the death of Lord Soulis, however singular, is not without a parallel in the real history of Scotland," and then he goes on to detail the story as commonly believed.

(3) The testimony of Professor Stuart that the sculptured stones at the manse of Glanis contain a representation of a similiar incident.

(4) The mention in the ballad of the Kaim of Mathers of the incident in which the laird of Mathers preferred to stay at home, and

"Buyld a lordlie Kaim  
All on the stonie rock,  
Which mote defie the sovereign's arms,  
Or eke the tempest's shock."

(5) The deed of pardon said to be in Arbuthnott House sets forth that Hugh of Arbuthnott, George Barelay, Alexander Falconer, William Graem, Gilbert Middleton, Patrick Barclay, and Alexander Graem are "received into the clan for the deid of whilom John Melville of Glenbervie."

It is asserted by Alexander Arbuthnott, who was elected principal of King's College, Aberdeen, in 1569, that Hugh of Arbuthnott built a chapel at Drumlithie, which he richly endowed, and appointed a priest to pray daily for John Melville's soul.

The Kincardineshire branch of the male line of the Melvilles survived no later than 1448, when Alexander Melville's only daughter and heiress,

ELIZABETH,

was married to Sir Alexander Auchinleck of Balmauno, a cadet of the family of Auchinleck in Ayrshire. Lady Auchinleck's only child was married in 1492 to Sir William Douglas of Braidwood, second son of Archibald, Earl of Angus, well known as Bell the Cat, and by her he had the barony of Glenbervie. These were the grandfather and grandmother of Sir William Douglas, afterwards ninth Earl of Angus, from whom were descended the Dukes of Hamilton and Douglas, and many others amongst the nobility. Sir William Douglas fell at Flodden Field, and his grandson fought at the Battle of Corrichie on Queen Mary's side, and, in spite of royal opposition, succeeded to the Earldom of Angus, as heir male of the eighth Earl who died in 1588.

The other monument in the Douglas aisle is a chest-shaped one, and the ends are ornamented with carvings of the Douglas and Graham arms. On the top of the tomb is the following inscription:—"Hic jacet vir illustrissimus, Gulielmus Duglasius, Angusiae comes, primus Glenbervii comarchus, qui dicto comitatu hereditario jure successit: Obiit kalend Julii, anno salutis, 1591; aetatis suae 59."—"Hic jacet illustrissima foemina, Domina Aegidia Graham, praefati comitis uxor, quae cum 40 annis cum ipso conjunctissime vixisset, ac vidua marito et sibi, hoc monumentum posuisset. Obit—anno aetatis—Die, anno domini."

The translation of the above is:—Here lies the most illustrious William Douglas, Earl of Angus, previously Lord of Glenbervie, who succeeded to the said Earldom by hereditary right. He died 1st July, 1591, in the 59th year of his age." "Here lies an illustrious lady, Aegidia Graham, wife of the foresaide Earl, with whom she lived in the closest affection for 40 years. In her widowhood she erected this monument for her husband, and died on the—day—in the year—aged—years."

The above Countess Aegidia was a daughter of Graham of Morpie, but neither the date of her death nor her age is recorded on the monument.

Their eldest son, William, succeeded to the Earldom. He was afterwards created Marquis of Douglas and Angus. He wrote a history of the family.

The second son, Robert, carried on the Glenbervie line, and his son William was created a baronet of Nova Scotia in 1625.

✓ The male line failed in the 7th Baronet son of Sir Robert the author of the "Peerage and Baronage of Scotland.

The property passed from the Douglasses in 1675. On April 24th of that year, Captain, afterwards Sir Robert Douglas, sold the lands and Barony of Glenbervie to

ROBERT BURNETT,

brother-german to Sir Alexander Burnett of Leys. Robert Burnett married Katherine Douglas. Their initials appear together on the old Mill of Glenbervie, Mrs Burnett married Sir William Nicolson.

This Sir Robert Burnett was succeeded by his son Thomas, about 1699, and when he died he left an only child Catherine. She afterwards became the

wife of Mr George Gordon of Buckie. With consent of her curator, Robert Burnett, merchant, Montrose, she sold Glenbervie on 6th March 1721, to

WILLIAM NICOLSON OF MERGY.

The Nicolsons of Glenbervie spring from Mr George Nicolson of Cluny (afterwards Sir George Nicolson), whose son, an eminent lawyer, bought the estate of Kemnay in his native county, from which on being made a Lord of Session in 1682, he assumed the title of Lord Kemnay.

His eldest son, Thomas, was made a Baronet in 1700, and dying without issue was succeeded in the title by William who, as above stated, bought Glenbervie in 1721.

This Sir William died at Edinburgh on June 7th, 1766, in his ninety-third year. In the April previous to his death a daughter was born to him, in noticing which the *Scots Magazine* of that date said :—

“ Sir William is at present 92 years of age, and has a daughter alive of his first marriage, aged 66. He married his present lady (Agnes Burnett) when he was 82, by whom he has had now six children.”

Sir William was succeeded by his son Sir James Nicolson, who died at Montrose in 1782, when the baronetcy became extinct, and the property of Glenbervie went to his elder sister, Helen, who died without issue. She was succeeded by her niece, Mrs Badenach, wife of the Rev. James Wilson, minister of Farnell, who was succeeded by her daughter Ann.

The present proprietor is Mr James

BADENACH NICOLSON.

Besides giving personal attention to the management of his estates, Mr Nicolson finds time to devote his energies to various branches of public work. In the long line of Glenbervie lairds of whom we have spoken, there have been those who in their day and their respective spheres have been highly distinguished. Not for ourselves only, therefore, but for those who may come after us, it will not, we hope, be considered, at the present opportunity, too much too say that if high character, energy, and tact, and untiring industry in the prosecution of all his work count for anything in the estimate of

one's worth, then it may safely be said that the present proprietor has well upheld the traditions handed down to him from the past.

Perhaps in connection with his county work he is best known. He holds the office of Convener of the County, and for long has taken a very prominent part in the various bodies entrusted with county management. He has been since its commencement Chairman of the County Council. For more than forty years he has been intimately identified with local parish business, and on the formation of the Parish Council he was by the newly-elected body awarded a unanimous vote of confidence and thanks for his past parochial administration. As a lawyer he has rendered important aid to various Governments in the drafting of bills affecting Scotland and Scottish interests, amongst which we may single out "the Local Government Act 1889." He holds the office of Permanent Counsel to the Scotch Education Department, and his work there is thus spoken of by Dr Craik, the Secretary to the same Department. :—

"Mr Nicolson became Counsel to this Department in 1878, when Sir Francis Sandford (afterwards Lord Sandford) was Secretary. Since then Mr Nicolson has had a constant and large part in the work of this Department. There are frequent references to him in the ordinary routine of the work—with regard to transfers of schools, combinations of School Boards, agreements between School Boards, &c. Besides this he gives frequent advice with regard to the schemes under which Educational Endowments are administered. He further advises on occasional questions of special legal difficulty affecting the administration of this Department. He has drafted more than one of the Acts (since that of 1872) which have dealt solely with education, and any clause in another Act which bore upon education would be revised by him. I need not say that his thorough acquaintance with all branches of local administration has been of the greatest use to me, and his knowledge of these subjects has always been at the service of the Department. I cannot, indeed, speak too strongly of the help he has given during these sixteen years."



## CHAPTER V.

## THE PULPIT.

The Church in Scotland has always exercised considerable influence with regard to many affairs in the state. Of old she had a determining voice in the councils of the nation. Rulers were oftentimes obliged to reckon with her, so strong a hold had she got over the nation. The leaders of the church shaped her policy. The people trusted in them, and regarded them as their "guide, philosopher and friend." In Glenbervie, as elsewhere, the direction of parish affairs was in the past, as in other parishes, largely in the hands of the kirk. A short account of the men who helped to shape its course of action, and who ministered from week to week to the parishioners will not therefore be uninteresting. A few notes on the other two churches—the Episcopal and Free—will also be added.

The parish church of Glenbervie, in the Presbytery of Fordoun, and Synod of Angus and Mearns was formerly a prebend of Breehin, and is rated in the old taxation at £20 Scots.

We have already seen that

JOHN OF STOWE,

pastor of the parish did homage to Edward I. at Lumphanan in Aberdeenshire, in 1296. Between that date and 1567 there is no authentic notice of the ministers who served in Glenbervie. In the latter year the parish was supplied by

JOHN AUCHINLECK, READER.

In 1570

JOHN CHRISTESOUN

was removed from Fetteresso, and put in charge of Glenbervie. He had also the care of Dnnnottar. His stipend from Glenbervie was £8 10s 4½d, along with the kirk lands. He was probably the Friar who for "usurping the authority of the kirk, and taking the ministry at his own hands" was outlawed at Stirling on 10th May, 1559. He was continued at Glenbervie till 1580.

The next two incumbents were members of the

DOUGLAS FAMILY.

One—Duncan—was a son of William, ninth Earl of Angus, and the other—Robert Douglas—was second son of Sir Archibald Douglas of Glenbervie. Duncan was minister from 1585 to 1589, and Robert from 1590 to 1635.



It was the latter who officiated at the marriage of the Earl of Angus and Lady Mary Gordon, which took place at the kirk of Bellie in 1632. Robert Douglas of Kilmonth, a son of the last named minister is said to have been ancestor of John Douglas of Feehil in Logie Buchan, whose son Sylvester became Lord Glenbervie and died in 1823, and who erected a monument in St Nicholas' churchyard, Aberdeen, to the memory of his brother-in-law, Mr James Mercer, author of a volume of lyric poems.

Before the death of Robert Douglas in 1635 a "suffragan"—that is an assistant and successor—had been appointed in the person of

#### JOHN CHALMER

in 1634. He was the son of John Chalmer of Balnacrage, graduated at Aberdeen University in 1630, and died in 1635, the year after his appointment to Glenbervie, his age being only 25. "Being ane young mane, he had no mōveable guidis nor gear but only his buiks, and the abulzements of his bodie, estimat at £6 14s 4d Scots, while at the same time he was awand to James Auchinleck in Drumlethe for ane yeir and ane half yeiris burd for cntertenment and chargis in beddine and burdinge." He ordained his corpse to be honourably buried in the Kirk of Lumphannan, to the poor of which parish he left 50 merks.

The next minister was the Rev.

#### JOHN IRVINE.

He was a student in divinity in 1633, and was admitted in 1636 to the charge of Glenbervie. He graduated at St Andrews in 1634. He died in November, 1680, in the 76th year of his age, and 46th of his ministry. His wife, Margaret Gordon, survived him, as also six children, four sons and two daughters. His sons were all ministers of the church.

Mr Irvine, who was probably a descendant of the Monboddo family was succeeded by his son

#### ROBERT IRVINE.

who was admitted on 7th February, 1678, that is two years before his father's death. He died about 1710, or 1711, and is said to have been an Arminian.

The Rev.

#### HENRY HAMILTON

was appointed in 1712. He was the son of Andrew (Alexander) Hamilton of Kinkell. He studied at

St Leonard's College, St Andrews, and graduated 14th July, 1694. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy on 11th February, 1703, and ordained to the parish of Navar in Forfarshire in 1708. After staying four years there he was translated to Glenbervie on 20th March, 1712. He died 20th May, 1754, in the 48th year of his ministry. His wife, Grizell Haldane, survived him eighteen years, having died on 30th August, 1772.

The next minister was the Rev.

ROBERT ALLARDICE.

He was a native of the County and schoolmaster at Fetteresso, and succeeded to the charge of Glenbervie in 1755. He graduated at Aberdeen, on 27th March, 1745, was licenced by the Presbytery, 27th June, 1753, and received from Sir James Nicolson of Glenbervie the presentation to the church and parish in August 1754, being ordained on the 19th of March in the following year. He died 12th Sept., 1779, in his 54th year and 25th of his ministry. He married in March, 1756, Margaret Simpson, who died at Montrose, 25th December, 1815.

The Rev.

ALEXANDER THOM

succeeded in 1780. He graduated at Aberdeen on April 25th, 1759, and thereafter was appointed Schoolmaster at Dunnottar. He was licensed by the Presbytery on 5th October, 1768, and received from the patron, Sir James Nicolson, the living in 1779, being ordained 18th May, 1780. He died on 13th April, 1815 in the 78th year of his age, and 35th of his ministry. He married in 1788 Christian Thom who died 20th September, 1846. Their son Mr Alexander Thom was licensed as a preacher of the Gospel, but afterwards became a surgeon at Dubcross near Manchester. Mr Thom wrote the account of the parish in Sinclair's statistical survey. There are old people still living who can recollect Mr Thom, and who speak of him as being a man beloved by the parishioners, and faithful in the discharge of his ministerial duties.

The Rev.

JAMES DRUMMOND.

was Mr Thom's successor. At the time of his presentation to the parish he was a teacher in Breechin. He was licenced by the Presbytery of Breechin on 10th August 1808, and ordained to Glenbervie on 24th September, 1815. For eleven years he carried

on his ministry in the old church beside the manse, but in 1826 a new church was built. After a ministry of over 50 years he died at Stonehaven in his 84th year on 11th December, 1867. He married on 9th April, 1827, Helen, daughter of Mr Forrest, and sister to Dr Forrest of Tulloch in Garvock. They had a son James, a physician, who died from the effects of a fever caught in the discharge of his professional duties.

There were also three daughters one of whom was married to the Rev. Mr Myres of Benholm, and another to the Rev. W. Gordon, who became Mr Drummond's assistant and successor.

Mr Drummond wrote the second Statistical Account of the parish in 1838, and published also a sermon entitled "The Warning Voice," preached at Stonehaven in 1844.

Mr Drummond's ministry is still spoken of by the parishioners with great esteem. He was a man of some originality of character. As a scholar he was widely read, as a preacher he possessed uncommon gifts of oratorical language. His prayers were marked by superbness of diction, whilst his sermons were marked by clearness of thought and beauty of language. He had a fund of humour mixed with a touch of satirical wit, which he could, as occasion needed, use with good effect. The anecdotes which are embodied in these chapters illustrate well this feature of his character.

The following estimate of Mr Drummond is from the pen of one of his co-presbyters who knew him well, and whose judgment regarding him may be safely accepted. "In sententious wisdom, and in geniality of soul, he of all men I have ever known came nearest to my idea of what Socrates must have been. Unbounded in hospitality he at the same time never failed to regale his guests with "the feast of reason and the flow of soul." He retained his ripe scholarship even in old age. I remember once coming in upon him on a winter day, when I found him seated at the fireside, and, without aid either from dictionary or comment, reading a play of Aeschylus as easily as most ministers could read a play of Shakespeare. He was a polished preacher, and as a pastor ever ready to respond to the call of his people, going about among them continually doing good; though with too much regard to the value of time both to

them and to himself to be going about continually. In a word, in his own favourite Greek he was, as they would have expressed it—"a King of Men."

Mr Drummond was, as we have stated, succeeded by the Rev.

#### WILLIAM GORDON,

his son-in-law. He was appointed assistant and successor in 1863, and received the full charge in 1867. He was translated from the parish of Glenbucket, and previously was assistant schoolmaster at Fyvie.

Mr Gordon, in addition to the faithful and earnest discharge of his ministerial duties, has from the commencement of compulsory education been a member of the School Board, whilst he was also for a very long time a useful member of the Parochial Board. During the thirty years in which Mr Gordon has ministered in the parish he has exercised a most beneficial influence on its affairs, and brought to bear on his work those excellent qualities which he certainly possesses in great measure—sound common sense, great tact, and wholesome counsel and advice. Recently a proof of the affection and esteem in which he is held among his people was afforded him by the election of his eldest son, the Rev.

#### P. L. GORDON

as his assistant and successor—thus setting a precedent unique in the ecclesiastical annals of the parish, of grandfather, father, and son, holding the ministry of the parish in succession.

#### THE FREE CHURCH.

In common with other parts of the country the parish of Glenbervie felt the throb of the movement which culminated in the "Disruption" of the Church of Scotland. For the following notes on the history of the Free Church we are indebted to the present minister, the Rev. Mr Boyd.

On the 16th of December, 1841, a meeting was held in Drumlithie presided over by Capt. James Burnett of Monboddo at which a

#### CHURCH DEFENCE ASSOCIATION

for the parish was formed. Church defence at that period bore a different meaning, of course, from what it does now.

The holding of the meeting was very keenly resented by Mr Drummond, the parish minister, and a correspondence ensued between him and the

Chairman, which is very interesting in its way, but we cannot do more than refer to it.

The "Church Defence Association" appointed a Committee of 21 members, the last survivor of whom, Mr Anderson, died a little more than a year ago. From its formation in December, 1841, till May, 1843, quarterly meetings were held for the diffusion of information regarding the principles contended for, and the progress of the Church's conflict with the Courts of Law. On the 3rd May, 1843, when the Disruption had become inevitable by the rejection of the Church's Claim of Right, and of a motion in Parliament for an inquiry into her grievances, a "Free Church Association" was formed, embracing practically the same membership as the "Church Defence Association," which had preceded it.

Then came the Assembly, at which the Church was rent in twain. The out-going ministers in the Presbytery—four in number—immediately constituted themselves into a Presbytery of the Free Church. On the 19th of June a deputation from Glenbervie went to this newly formed Presbytery to ask for a supply of preaching and ordinances.

On the 10th July a Communion Roll was drawn up containing the names of 89 persons. The first Communion was held on the last Sabbath of July, 1843, but there is no record of who officiated or who partook of the ordinance. It only appears that on 24th July, 1843, the Rev. James M'Gowan, Bervie, gave out tokens and admitted 12 young communicants. Worship was conducted for a time in a hall at the foot of the village of Drumlithie. It was conducted with the old inn, which stood on the spot now occupied by the shops of Mr J. Mowat, bootmaker, and Mrs Milne, baker. But very soon steps were taken to build a church a site having been obtained on what was then known as the Cothillock. In due time the building was finished at a cost of between £300 and £400. At first the affairs of the congregation were carried on by a Committee of Management. But at length on 24th November 1844, three elders and four deacons were ordained, thus constituting a Session and Deacons Court. The names of the elders were George Kerr, Laddlestoune, Alex. Barclay, Drumlithie, and Robert Anderson, Drumlithie. The Deacons were John Braud, David Sinclair, William

Balfour, and Thomas Gibson. All of these have now passed away.

On the 5th December, 1844,

MR ANDREW GLEN,

probationer, upon the unanimous call of the congregation, was ordained and admitted as their first pastor, the Rev. George Philip of Stonehaven, (now Dr Philip of Free St John's, Edinburgh), conducting the services. Under Mr Glen, the congregation became consolidated and increased in numbers. On the 8th of September, 1845, the number on the roll was 150, and with slight fluctuations that seems to have been about the average membership for a lengthened period. Within the last 25 years, however, diminishing population has reduced it to about 120, and about that figure it still remains, sometimes rising a little above it, and at other times falling slightly below.

The course of Mr Glen's ministry was quiet and uneventful. The universal testimony regarding him is that he was a sound and solid Gospel preacher and a faithful pastor, watching carefully over the life and conduct of his people and earnestly seeking to promote their highest good.

The church building proved very unsatisfactory, having been rushed up too rapidly and with insufficient inspection. Attempts to improve it and render it water-tight having failed, it was taken down and entirely rebuilt very nearly on the same site, the new building being opened on the 15th September, 1850. Before this time, in 1848, an additional piece of ground had been feued and a manse erected. In course of time a school was added to the congregational organisation, which was taught by a female teacher, and carried on in the building now known as the Public Hall. It did good educational work in the district and was carried on successfully till the Education Act came in force in 1873 when it was handed over to the School Board.

On the 26th July, 1863, a communion Sabbath, Mr Glen was stricken down in the pulpit when he had just given out the text of his Action Sermon, from Psalm 119, verse 174, "I have longed for Thy salvation O Lord." He was carried into the Manse, but never rallied, and died a few days after, leaving a fragrant memory. His last text is engraven on his tombstone in Glenbervie Churchyard. After a vacancy of some months, the



REV. JAMES CAMERON,  
a native of Udney, Aberdeenshire, was ordained minister of the congregation on the 10th March, 1861. After an earnest and efficient ministry of fully eleven years, Mr Cameron, by exposure to a snowstorm in the winter of 1874, fell into an illness, which developed into consumption, and was removed by death in May, 1875. A man of sprightly and genial temperament, an accomplished scholar, and with pulpit gifts of no mean order, he is still remembered with affectionate esteem by not a few in the congregation.

The vacancy which followed the death of Mr Cameron continued for about eight months. After a temporary division of opinion and feeling in the congregation, they came at length to a cordial agreement and unanimous choice of the present minister.

REV. R. MASSON BOYD,  
a native of Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, who was harmoniously settled on the 15th of December, 1875.)

For twenty years now Mr Boyd has most zealously attended to the spiritual wants of his flock, and is held by them in the greatest esteem. He is an efficient and intelligent member of both the School Board and the Parish Council, and was previously one of the elected representatives on the Parochial Board, in all of which offices he has done good work for the community amongst whom he labours.

## CHAPTER VI.

EPISCOPAL CHAPEL—JACOBITE TROUBLES—CHAPEL  
DESTROYED BY CUMBERLAND—PENAL LAWS—  
INCUMBENTS OF CHURCH.

For the last two hundred years at least there has been an Episcopal Chapel at Drumlithie. The Episcopal Church in Scotland was disestablished in 1689, and since that date Episcopalians have been settled in the village. The whole district, indeed, at certain periods during that time, was strongly Episcopalian, and the members attending the Drumlithie chapel were drawn from a considerable area around the church as a centre. There were mission stations at Redmyre, Arbuthnott, and other places dependent sometimes on Drumlithie and at other times on the church at Laurencekirk.

In common with other Churches in the county, the Episcopal Church in Drumlithie suffered in the troublous times of the Jacobite risings.



The Episcopalians, it is well known, were strongly attached to the Jacobite cause, and when the standard of the Earl of Mar was raised at Braemar in the interests of the "Pretender" many from this district, which was then strongly Jacobite went "over the mountains" to fight under Mar and the other Highland chiefs. Some of the adherents of the church at Drumlithie must have lived on the lands of the Earl Marischal, and it is probable that they had thus gone to swell the Jacobite forces.

The rising was fruitless. The Pretender embarking at Montrose made for France, and the Episcopal Church was placed under penal laws. In 1718 a law was made that no Episcopal clergyman was to officiate in a congregation where more than *nine* persons, besides his own household were present, without praying in express words for the reigning king. This the Episcopal clergy would not do; accordingly, they were gradually put out of their livings.

At the time of the second Jacobite rising (1745) the Episcopal clergyman at Drumlithie was the

REV. JOHN PETRIE.

The following year the chapel at Drumlithie, along with those at Muchalls and Stonehaven was burned by the Duke of Cumberland, who was then in pursuit of the "Bonnie Prince Charlie." Consequently Mr Petrie was obliged to resort to a meeting house in order to preach to his followers. Part of that meeting house still remains, and forms the wall on the right hand side of the entrance to the present Rectory at Drumlithie. In these meeting houses not more than *five* persons could meet, for the penal laws against the Episcopalians had by this time been made more severe, because of the conviction the Government had that they were enemies to the reigning sovereign. Persons violating these laws were liable to a penalty of six months' imprisonment for a first offence, and banishment to the West Indies (for life) for a second offence.

Accordingly from various districts of the county persons were brought to give evidence before the Sheriff, as to whether they had heard or knew of divine service having been performed by any minister of the Episcopal communion, since the first of September, 1746. The object of this was to punish the *non-jurors*, that is those—pastor and

people—who refused to take the oath of allegiance, and who continued to pray for the Prince, and not for his Majesty King George and his successors. On the thirty-first day of October, 1746, amongst a great many others, there were two William Thomson and James Beattie in Drumlithie who were thus judicially examined at Stonehaven. But the reply given by all of them on that occasion was in the negative.

Two years later, however, three Episcopal clergymen in the county, including Mr Petrie, were tried at Stonehaven before Sheriff Depute Young. Evidence was forthcoming against the three, the witnesses from Drumlithie against Mr Petrie being James Dickson in Kinmonth; James Campbell at Mill of Glenbervie; and Mr Robert Murray at Strepends. These all declared that Mr Petrie had preached in his house at Drumlithie.

The defence set up in favour of all three was the same. They craved to be set free from the charge in respect that all the witnesses were *socii criminis*, in so far as they were guilty of offences themselves on the statute libelled, as being undue hearers at the times and places libelled, which subjected them to the penalty of five pound sterling, and consequently were gainers or losers by the cause, and that they did not inform within five days, and were there without his approbation or knowledge. The Procurator - Fiscal, however, repelled the defences, and the Sheriff found that they were all competent witnesses and continued the cause.

Whatever may have been the sentence pronounced against Mr Petrie and the other clergymen, they were at all events confined in the old Tolbooth at Stonehaven for six months during the winter of 1748-49. Their followers during their imprisonment gave them every attention, and “contrived to convey plenty o’ a’thing to them.” The story of how the fisherwives contrived to get their children secretly baptised by clambering up to the cell of their pastor is well known, although this ceremony was chiefly performed by Mr Troup and Mr Greig. On their liberation they returned to their respective charges, and preached to their adherents in private houses—Mr Greig preaching in the meeting house already mentioned.

Matters went more quietly afterwards for the

Episcopal Church, although during these troubled times the Church at large had been sadly stripped and impoverished both in regard to ministers and chapels. In 1688 she was governed by two Archbishops and twelve bishops, and served by nearly 1000 clergy, and now after the lapse of a hundred years was reduced to six Bishops and fifty clergy—most of these living in the North Eastern counties of Scotland—Aberdeenshire and the Mearns.

Great was the desolation of the Episcopal Church in Scotland at this time. Nevertheless, here and there over the land, congregations were gathered together, which allied themselves with the ritual and practice of the English Church. Hence arose the designation "English Kirk" as applied even yet in Drumlithie and elsewhere. These did not wish to throw in their lot with the Scottish branch of the church, and nothing was more natural than to adopt the forms of the English Church, and hence these were called the English Church in Scotland. On the repeal of the penal laws most of these joined again the Scotch Episcopal Church.

To take the place of the church destroyed by Cumberland, the Episcopalian in Drumlithie worshipped in an adjoining building, now occupied partly by Miss Annandale. Part of this was formerly the Parsonage. This building was gifted by one Miss Turnbull, belonging to the church, and resident in the parish of Kinneff in which parish there were then a considerable number of adherents to the church. A gallery ran across the north and south end of the building, access to the south gallery being got by an outside stair. The pulpit stood on the west side, just where the entrance to the house is at present. The church or meetinghouse for very many years proved of great service to the members of the church who gathered there.

The Rev. Robert Spark had charge of the church at Drumlithie towards the end of the 18th century. ~~He was a native of Craigo, being the son of a dyer~~ there. His first charge seems to have been the mission station at Redmyre, then dependent on the church at Laureneekirk. The penal laws at this time were still unrepealed, and the greatest caution had to be observed in carrying on his work. Information was, however, lodged against Mr Spark,

and he was tried at the Circuit Court for having performed the marriage rite. When on his way riding between Stonehaven and Aberdeen he passed the couple whom he had united. As they were bent on the same errand as himself he accosted them. "This will be a sair day for me," said the minister. "Ow', fou will it be that, minister? fa can say I am married," replied the man, and so it turned out as the man had anticipated. No witnesses appeared, and the case fell to the ground. Mr Spark continued to reside for some years at Redmyre and discharge the two-fold office of teacher and pastor.

Subsequently he was called to Drumlithie, and he continued there to discharge faithfully his duties to his flock till 1817. By this time the congregation had been rallied together again. The penal laws against the church had been partially repealed in the last decade of the 18th century, and in course of time Mr Spark had so consolidated them that a new church was required. This church was built in 1818, and forms now St John's Hall, and a part of the present Rectory. It was turned into a hall for the use of the young men some years ago.

Mr Spark, the previous year, was translated to Laurencekirk, and held active charge there till 1833, when he resigned. He died in 1837 in the eighty-first year of his age and the fifty-seventh of his ministry. He was married to one Jean Beattie, a native of Laurencekirk. Her family was distantly related to that of the poet Beattie. She died in 1838, the year after Mr Spark's death.

The strong Jacobite leanings of Mr spark were transmitted to his family. His son, a surgeon in the East India Company's service, died at Bombay in 1892.

From *Fraser's History of Laurencekirk* we take the following anent his three daughters, Jean, Margaret and Catherine. They possessed many interesting relics of the olden time, and their minds were stored with information on the more prominent events of the last century, and about the principal families of the county. Their Jacobite leanings were retained until the end of their days, but never offensively obtruded. Miss Margaret showed a portrait to a friend, asking, as she held it out, "Do you know who that is?" "Oh yes; it is the young Pretender!" was the mischievous reply. She held

up both hands in amazement, exclaiming, "What!" "I mean, Its Prince Charles Edward Stuart." She calmed immediately—"Ay, that *may* do."

The first incumbent of the new Church was the

REV. ROBERT DYCE,

and during the next fourteen years he carried on the work of the Church in a quiet and uneventful way. He resigned the charge in 1832 owing to an affection of the throat, and went abroad.

During the next two years the Church was served by two clergymen who each stayed but a short time. The Rev. David Buchanan officiated till May 1833, and the Rev. John Oldfield succeeded him but only remained till March 1834. This Mr Oldfield was assistant to Mr Spark in Laurencekirk, and seems to have worked the charge at Drumlithie at the same time as he helped Mr Spark.

In 1834 the

REV. WILLIAM WEBSTER

was appointed. He graduated M.A. at Aberdeen University in 1828. He was ordained Deacon in 1834, and Priest in the following year by the Bishop of Edinburgh. Mr Webster remained seven years in Drumlithie when he was presented to the church of St John the Evangelist at New Pitsligo. Mr Webster is still at Pitsligo, although he has retired from the more active duties of the charge.

Following him came the

REV. ROBERT KILGOUR THOM.

He was a native of Peterhead, and was born in 1819. For a quarter of a century he ministered to the church at Drumlithie, but in 1866 he was incumbent of St James' church, Stonehaven.

He was a physician as well as a minister, and during that time he went in and out amongst the people in the neighbourhood, administering comfort and relief to their bodies as well as their souls. He was a man universally beloved for his kind works, and his memory is still held green in the hearts of those amongst whom he laboured so long.

Mainly through his exertions the present neat church was built. It was erected in 1863 after plans by the late Mr Charles Brand of Fordoun, a valued member of his congregation. The church, which runs from east to west, is in the Gothic style, and consists of a nave and chancel, with vestry and organ chamber attached.

The east window of three lights was placed there as a special memorial of the work of Dean Thom. The first is the baptism of Christ by the Baptist in reference to the dedication of the church to St John. The second represents the Crucifixion, and the third represents our Lord healing all manner of sickness and disease in allusion to the twofold work of the Dean as physician and clergyman. Underneath is this inscription:—

“In memoriam viri admodum Reverendi Roberti Kilgour Thom, Decani, Brechinensis, quondam hujusce ecclesiac Parochi, nati, 15th Jan., MDCCCXIX, denati, 24th Jan., MDCCCLXXIV.

Which translated reads:—

“In memory of the Very Rev. Robert Kilgour Thom, Dean of Brechin, formerly clergyman of this church. He was born 15th Jan., 1819, and died 24th Jan., 1874.”

Upon the present church is a shield charged in pale with the arms of the diocese and those of the late Bishop Forbes. It also bears his Lordship's initials and those of the Dean, and the date of the dedication of the church, 1863. The Dean is buried in the churchyard adjoining the church where his grave is marked by a handsome Iona cross.

Two other windows in the chancel contain memorials of former members of the congregation, one of them representing Christ blessing little children, being “to the greater glory of God, and in pious memory of Robert Dyce Smith placed in the church by his widow Margaret Smith, also in remembrance of their two children 1891.”

Mr Smith was long postmaster in the village, and besides being a valued member of the Episcopal Church, took a great interest in all that was undertaken for the good of the district.

Dean Thom was succeeded by the

REV. JAMES GAMMACK, M.A.

He was incumbent from 1866 to 1883. Mr Gammack graduated at Aberdeen University in 1857 and studied theology at Trinity College Glenalmond. Ordained Deacon in 1859 and priest in 1861, he held the charges successively of Tillymorgan in Aberdeenshire, and Pitlochry in Perthshire. In 1866 he came to St. John's, Drumlithie.

Mr Gammack was a man fond of literary pursuit, and specially devoting himself to antiquarian and theological research. He was a corresponding



member of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland ; and a member of the Cambrian Archæological Association. In addition he was the editor of the revised edition of Jervise's Memorials of Angus and the Mearns which was partly rewritten and corrected by him. He contributed in 1877 a series of articles on Scotch, Irish, and Welsh Early Christians to Dr Smith's "Dictionary of Christian Biography," and another series of articles on Celtic Subjects to Arch's "Dictionary of Christian Antiquities." Mr Gammack resigned the charge at Drumlithie in 1883, and presently holds a charge in America, whither he went.

The later incumbents of the church have been :—Rev. Robert C. Johnstone (1883-1891); Rev. William Lumsden Walker (1891-1895.)

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE KIRK—PATRON SAINT—THE OLD CHURCH—THE DRY SUMMER OF 1826—EPITAPHS.

The patron Saint of Glenbervie Kirk was St Michael, and this name is preserved in Michael Fair, still held annually at Drumlithie, although like other fairs the glory is departed from it. Probably this fair had at one time been held at Glenbervie. At Dellevaired stood St Mary's chapel, and that place there is still a spring called "Mary's Well."

The present

#### PARISH CHURCH

stands on a rather bleak spot on the north side of road passing Glenbervie House. It was built in 1826 and is a substantial and commodious building. During the summer of 1826 "the dry summer," or as it is sometimes significantly designated the "year of short corn," the Rev. Mr Drummond, then minister, preached to his hearers in the graveyard.

Amidst the

#### PICTURESQUE SURROUNDINGS

of that old churchyard from Sunday to Sunday, during all that long summer did the worthy Mr Drummond preach to his flock. And we have often thought that there were here the elements of a picture worthy of the brush of a Collins or a Wilkie. One has seen weird and yet telling pictures of the old Covenanters on the bleak hillside, stand-



ing not with the Bible and psalm-book only, but also with the sword or the spear; but here all fear was absent, except perhaps the fear of God which pervaded the sincere band of worshippers. The troubled face of the stern Covenanter gives place to the holy calm of the peaceful Christian; the bleak hillside is changed into the quiet God's acre; while the minister eagerly holds forth to his gathered flock some resting on the mossy tombstone, others sheltered under the nodding trees.

At the sight of the greenness and gladness that surrounds the city of the dead, he tells his hearers of a fairer land, in which there shall be eternal day; with the murmur of waters in their ears, he tells them of the river of life of which if one should drink he should never thirst; as the lark rose, soaring and singing from its grassy bed and mingled betimes its song with that of the worshippers, he spoke to them of the heavenly choirs, in the New Jerusalem, and of the sweeter music there; pointing to the roofless Temple of God he told them of a Temple of God not made with hands eternal in the heavens; and ere he handed round to them the bread and wine on the calm bright Communion Sunday, he told them of the Bread of Life and the poured Blood that would be unto them a sufficient and an abiding spiritual nourishment.

The old church occupied a very attractive and desirable spot. It stood beside the Manse on the north bank of the Bervie, and was surrounded by fine old trees, many of them still standing, round which the ivy hangs in green profusion.

The interesting old graveyard surrounding it slopes gently to the south, and contains many curious epitaphs engraved on the tombstones.

The old church was partly rebuilt in 1771, and in 1794, as stated in Sinclair's Statistical Account was "in good condition, but ill-contrived and too small." The Manse was built in the first quarter of the Eighteenth Century, probably about 1725. The stipend in 1794 was 56 bolls of meal, 32 of bear, and £43 17s 10½d in money, including £5 for communion elements.

In the parish at that time there were 200 Scotch Episcopalians, 1 Seceder, and 1 Roman Catholic, and as the population was then above 1300 the remaining 1100 were probably connected with the Parish Church, and as we have seen it was considered too small.

The church ran from east to west, the burial vault of the Douglas family, forming the chancel end of the kirk. This vault still stands covered with ivy and shaded by trees. The only other part of the church that remains is a pillar containing a brass plate commemorating the members of the family of Stuarts of Inchbreck.

There was a gallery in the church and an outside stair leading to the Glenbervie Loft. As was usual in parish churches certain seats were allotted to the poor, but the rest of the church was let. The description given of the church seats in the old Session Registers was very specific.

The following are some of the entries regarding the letting:—

“Long Dask alias Cowden’s Dask, containing five persons.

Robert Brand took 2 Rooms ;

James Ritchie took 2 Rooms ;

Robert Spark took 1 Room ;

whereto he has right without payment.”

“Crooked Dask, including yt., under ye Stair, containing 7 persons.”

“James Lawrence in Easttown his right to a Room in ye Crooked Dask (ut supra) was sustained relevant. Likeways ye above said Robert Spark was sustained for a Room in Cowden’s Dask without payment, both of ym having Acts of ye Session in their favours.”

The price of the seats in the Church was by no means uniform, as the following resolution of the Session will show. “The Session layes on half a merk, Scotts, to be pay’d for each room in ye Dasks in ye body of ye Church, except John Greig’s, which is only a groat per room. Likeways on ye left 4 shills, Scotts, for each room in ye breists of it, and 2 shills, Scots, for each room over ye whole of ye rest of it.

Occasionally also the Session was turned into a Court before which certain of the congregation asserted their rights to their seats. “Eodem die John Brand in Foord and Robert Brand in Quithle brother to ye said John Brand made it clearly evident that ye Dask yt stands at ye back of Minister’s Dask did properly belong to ym, witnesses attesting that ye said Brand’s father bought from one Robert Brand in Upper Kinmonth and possessed it many years. Therefor ye Session continues, ye said Brands in possession of it.”

The two inscriptions in the Douglas vault having been already noticed we will here give a few of the more interesting

# EPITAPHS

in the kirkyard.

## 1.

John S. of Robert Heross in Lumgair, d. 1737,  
a. 25 :—

As many says, she who here lays  
Was vertious, wise, and chaste ;  
*She* being dead, we do believe  
Hir soul to glory past.

An inscription from a table stone presents some pretty long ages.

John Lyall, many years in Mill of Glenbervie, died 13th October 1830 aged 84 ; Christian Austine his wife died 3rd Nov. 1833 aged 79 ; Their family George, merchant in Aberdeen died 1861 aged 78 ; John, farmer, Mill of Glenbervie, died 1861, aged 81 ; Helen died 1863 aged 72 ; and David, merchant, Aberdeen, died 1866 aged 80.

From a flat slab the following is taken.

Here lyes John Taylour, husband to Margaret Blebear, sometime in Quithill, who dyed the 18 day of Aprile 1727, and of age 59. This relict still in road of duties bear for which she has obtained a lasting name.

The next one relates to one Greig and his colleague Watson, both joiners to trade, the latter belonging to Kinneff.

In memory of David Greig : his age was 28 and death sudden on the sea beach of Aberdeen, August 6th, 1818.

Young sprightly lads as you pass by  
Stop and review how low I lie ;  
My colleguo fell close by my side,  
At nine we were as brisk as ye,  
At ten were in eternity ;  
Swept by a strong reflux tide.

I twenty-eight  
Ho twenty-four,  
One fatal wave  
Did both devour.

Consider then our sudden fate,  
Think of your own ere yet too late ;  
And by faith to tho Saviour flee ;  
And be that great redemption sought  
Which with His precious blood He bought  
Then even death your friend shall be.

The next two inscriptions are from headstones.

The Rev. Andrew Glen, of Free Church Glen-bervie, died 4th August, 1863, aged 67. "Who for 19 years taught them publicly and from house to house, making full proof of his ministry, with what success the great day will disclose. It is their comfort, under their sore bereavement, to believe that he has obtained the desire of his heart, so beautifully expressed in his last text—"I have longed for Thy salvation."

James Drummond, M.D., only son of the Rev. James Drummond, minister of this parish, born 12th Jan., 1836, died at Brechin, 16th March, 1859. The said Rev. James Drummond died 11th Dec., 1867 in the 83rd year of his age, and 52nd of his ministry.

The Rev. Mr Drummond's son, a skilful physician, caught fever while in his professional duties, from the effects of which he died. The Rev. Mr Drummond married a sister of Dr Forrest of Tulloch in Garvock commemorated in the following inscription:—

In memory of Alexander Forrest of Tulloch in Garvock, who died at Hillside of Hedderwick, 13th June, 1862, aged 75.

Dr Tulloch made money abroad, and bought the property of Tulloch, in which he was succeeded by a sister, on whose death in 1867, it came to her nephew, Mr James Scott, Solicitor, Stonehaven.

There are of course also the Burns tombstones which contain near the foot the ordinary carvings of an hour glass, mattock, spade and skull, &c.

## CHAPTER VIII.

PAROCHIAL BOARDS—KIRK FUNDS—NO TAXATION  
IN GLENBERVIE—COLLECTIONS—BAD COPPERS—  
BOXMASTER—JAMES BURNES OF HAWKHILL.

The year 1895 marks a turning-point in the history of parochial legislation in Scotland. The old order changeth, and Parish Councils have taken the place of the Parochial Boards.

Perhaps we are too near to take a comparative view of the work that has been done by them since 1845, when they were inaugurated, but, judged as a whole, it will be admitted that they have done their work in an efficient and economical manner, and with a due regard to the interests of all concerned.

It is commonly supposed that there have been Parochial Boards in Scotland only since the passing of the Poor Law Act half a century ago. But such is not the case. There has been a Parochial Board in Scotland ever since the Reformation, for watching over the interests of the poor, although the constitution of that Board has from time to time undergone considerable alterations.

A short historical retrospect when we are, as now, at "the parting of the ways" may not, therefore, be out of place here, before we glance at old church life in Glenbervie.

For the first three decades after the Reformation, the care of the poor, so far as that was provided for by the civil law was, in the case of landward parishes, entrusted to Justices appointed by the

#### KING'S COMMISSIONERS.

Of course in the early days the Reformed Church there was an ecclesiastical administration of charities as well as collections. This continued till 1597.

In that year this jurisdiction was vested in Kirk Sessions, and in 1672 it was committed to the

#### HERITORS AND KIRK SESSION

of each parish conjointly, and in their hands it continued till the passing of the Act of 1845.

During the next half century (1845-1895) there was in every parish a Parochial Board. It consisted of the owners of lands and heritages of the yearly value of £20, the Provost and Bailies of Royal Burghs, several members of Kirk-Session, and several elected representatives of the remnant ratepayers. The

#### PAROCHIAL BOARD

made up the roll of the Poor, fixed the allowances for paupers, and imposed assessments for the support of the poor. The executive officer of the Parochial Board was the Inspector of Poor, his duties being to inquire into and report on the circumstances of each applicant for relief, and to convey to paupers the allowances granted by the Board.

The salaried officers of the Parochial Board transferred their services, in accordance with the provisions of the Parish Councils Act, to the Parish Council, and the Inspector of Poor is henceforth designated Parish Clerk.

Possibly, in the near future, the Parish Councils

may be entrusted with other concerns than the care of the poor, but it is sincerely to be hoped that the new and more directly representative body will deal as kindly and considerately with all the interests entrusted to its care as the persons charged with parochial administration have done in the past.

In the past the Church of Scotland has looked upon it as part of her duty to provide for the poor. Indeed the Scottish Reformers regarded this as a part of Christianity itself and took care to see it properly carried out. The First Book of Discipline has it expressly stated that "every several Kirk must provide for the poor within itself."

Whence came the funds then out of which the poor got their allowance? These were various. We shall glance at them and see how many of these sources of supply were available in Glenbervie. The chief sources of provision in the past were—1st, assessment; 2nd, church collections; 3rd, fines; 4th, dues and fees; 5th, bell-penny; 6th, mortcloth; 7th benefactions; 8th, interest on stock; and lastly, sale of pauper's effects.

Nineteen years after the Reformation an Act of Parliament was passed, by which the judges in landward parishes were empowered to tax and stent the whole inhabitants "according to the estimation of their substance," in such weekly charges as were necessary for the support of the poor of the parish.

There seems to have been, however, a disinclination to impose this tax, and as far as can be learned, the assessment was never levied in Glenbervie, or indeed, in Kincardineshire. Says a writer of the early part of the present century—"The wealthy have hitherto had too much good sense to admit of it, and the indigent have not been contaminated with the corrupting and degrading principle. Very few of our poor would accept of a parochial donation without the most urgent cause. Hence the benevolent feelings have room to operate."

There was a landable spirit shown here on both sides. The Heritors and Kirk Session showed a disinclination to adopt new schemes that involved taxation, whilst on the other hand the poor showed that manly independence so characteristic of the Scotch people. But what do we of the present day think when we hear the principle of taxation for the poor described no longer ago than the beginning of the present century as "corrupting and degrading." Verily the times are changed!



We shall notice as the second source of provision for the poor, the church collections, although they might have been set down as the primary source of supply.

Voluntary collections for the poor were common in most parishes long before the stent or tax was imposed.

The common method of taking up the collections, although varying from time to time over the church at large, has always been with the old-fashioned ladle. Indeed, at the present time, that is the plan adopted in Glenbervie Church.

How much the collections amounted to in these olden days it is not easy to learn. There were many causes which would make them fluctuate. An unpopular minister, secessions, civil disturbances, weather and many others would all have a disturbing effect on the amount of coppers put into the church coffers. It does not appear that Glenbervie was much troubled with either of the first two of these, though no doubt along with her neighbours she shared in the troublous times of the Jacobite risings.

The collections of course at communion seasons exceeded largely in amount the ordinary weekly ones. Besides these, there were special collections for special purposes, which would not commend themselves now to the good offices of the Kirk, for example, the upbuilding and pulling down of bridges, or in aid of other public works in which the Church was interested. There are entries to be found in nearly all the parish records regarding these.

For example on July 16, 1656 a

#### COLLECTION OF MEAL

was appointed to be made throughout the parish of Arbuthnott, for the behoof of one Andrew Crag, a poor and sick man, put under the cure of George Musehal, physician in Drumlithie. On the following week, in the same place, a collection amounting to five merks was made for the relief of some Englishmen taken prisoners by Turkish pirates.

In the year 1729 the Kirk-session of Glenbervie contributed £1 (Scots) "to help up with a bridge in ye parish of Benholm," and a little later (Oct. 5) £3 "to ye uppulling of a bridge over the water of Cowie." Seemingly the uppulling of the one bridge was accounted of three times more value in the



eyes of the Kirk-session, than the putting up of the one at the coast-side.

The church door collections at the Kirk of Glenbervie for the last quarter of 1747 and the first month of 1748 were as follows :—

1747, October,	..	..	£1	17	8
„ November,	..	..	1	17	5
„ December,	..	..	1	4	2
1748, January,	..	..	2	9	10
			<hr/>		
			£7	9	1

And in addition to this there were added in the way of penalties another £8, making for the four months a total of £15 9s 1d.

Assuming this to be a fair average of the weekly collections over the year, there would be collected annually from collections alone close on £90 Scots money. The fines of course were considerable also. At the Sacramental diets the collections were much larger than usual. For example in 1753 these amounted to £20 16s 6d. In that year the Session disbursed £72 1s 7d out of a total income of £90 4s 2d, leaving in the Treasurer's hands as a nest egg something over £18 Scots.

When the first Statistical Account was written a hundred years ago, the weekly collections averaged about 8s. These statistics do not show how much was given by the individual worshipper on the Sabbaths long ago,—whether it was the time-honoured halfpenny or penny that was dropped into the plate or ladle, or how many passed by. But probably

BURNS,

in his “Holy Fair,” came pretty near the truth when he describes the usual contributions to the plate—

“When by the plate we set our nose,  
Weel heaped up wi’ *ha’ pence*,  
A greedy glowr black bonnet throws,  
And we maun draw oor *tippence*.”

Probably the larger sum from the fact that he was accounted a man of more than ordinary consequence.

The only record of Glenbervie Church extant, and from which the above facts have been taken, gives us presumably the amount of the collections in *good* money, but makes no mention of the

BAD COPPERS.

although, no, doubt, these had crept into the ladles

of Glenbervie as they did elsewhere. Sometimes the proportion of good to bad was as three to two. But even these were turned to good account in the cause of the poor. For, occasionally, when a considerable number had gathered in the Treasurer's hands he was instructed to dispose of them to the best advantage.

In 1786 the Kirk Session "on inspecting their funds found they had a considerable quantity of bad halfpence which they agreed should be sold in Aberdeen. The quantity of bad halfpence in the box amounted to no less a sum than £10 8s 1½d" (Scots). As late as 1800 the Treasurer reported that the quantity of bad halfpence collected for some time past and amassed in his hands amounted to nearly twelve pounds stg. The meeting was of opinion that it would be very prejudicial to the interests of the poor to dispose of all the above sum for bad copper, and that as a considerable part of them consisted of mint halfpence they might still circulate in some after time, therefore resolved to keep them for some time." In this their judgment was at fault, for the following year the Treasurer had sorrowfully to report "that as no hopes remained that the bad halfpennies lately in his hands would ever circulate, he had sold the whole amounting to £3 5s 3d to a copper-smith. That the weight of the whole is £66l 2s, on which at the rate of 10d per £6 Dutch weight, and after deducting 8d for carriage, amounts to £2 10s 3d as per cash book."

Of course it must not be presumed that the poor received the full collections. The other expenses connected with the church had also to be borne, the stipends of the Session Clerk, precentor, and beadle having to be met out of them.

In judging of the Christian liberality of the church one must remember that money went a good deal further a century ago than it does now, and consequently a penny represented far more than it does now.

It may be asked how the very considerable sums of money thus collected were disbursed. This was commonly done in the early days of the Reformed Church through the

#### DEACONS,

an office whose duties, according to the statement in the Second Book of Discipline (1578), was

“to receive and to distribute the hails ecclesiastical gudes unto them to whom they are appoyntit.” But in practice it was not found practicable to find say half-a-dozen men suitable for the deaconate and other six for the eldership in every parish. Consequently the duties of the deacons were conjoined to those of the elders. Thus the

#### ELDERS

long ago performed the duties of Inspector of Poor. They were not paid, however, for the work they did, but they gave a general oversight of the poor in their respective districts, reported any cases that came under their observation, and carried to the poor whatever gratuities the session thought fit to grant.

When, in 1672, the care of the poor in each parish was vested in the elders and heritors conjointly it became necessary to appoint a Treasurer, who could from time to time furnish the Kirk Session with a statement of the moneys actually received and disbursed. Especially was this necessary where the number of paupers was considerable, or the funds were large. The meetings of the Kirk Session with the Heritors would be but seldom, perhaps not above once a year, and so the Kirk Session had to account for their intrusions, sometimes over a considerable period.

The Treasurer of the Kirk Session was often known as the

#### BOXMASTER,

from the fact that kirk Sessions had in those days what was known as a Kirk box. Into that box all the collections, or whatever was left after the weekly distribution was over, went Sabbath by Sabbath, and at the end of the financial year the box was opened, and its contents were examined and counted.

The office of Boxmaster or Treasurer seems to have been of some consequence in those days, nor is this to be wondered at when he had, so to speak, the command of the moneys within the power of the Kirk Session.

It may interest some to know that one of the Burns family was so highly esteemed in Glenbervie in his own day as to be elected Boxmaster.

This was

JAMES BURNES

of Hawkhill, son of William Burness of Bogjorgan.

An entry in the Register of Discipline and Accounts, dated June 20, 1726, bears that "James Burness in Hawkhill was elected Box-master by a majoritie of votes."

On October 22nd of the following year, the Session again met, and "verified all their accounts since their last meeting on that account, and found them all right at which time James Burness in Hawkhill resigned his office as Box-master, after he had given a clear count and reckoning to the rest of the members. The elders hold themselves content and well satisfied, and oblidged themselves to pay to the said James Burness the sum of nine pounds thirteen shillings and four pennies Scots, he having disbursed so much more to the poor than he received on their account. It was then put on the Leit, whether John Hog, James Burness, or Archibald Reith should be Boxmaster, and James Burness was chosen by a majority of votes." This would seem to indicate that James Burness not only performed all the duties of Box-master with exactness and care, but that also he had gained the confidence of the Kirk Session in this important position in the parish.

Indeed it would appear from an entry dated October 31st, 1747, that he had retained this office for over twenty years. The entry is as follows:—"This day the Session being met and constitute, granted a discharge to James Burness in Hawkhill for faithfully discharging the office of Treasurer from the time of his incumbeney to this present time."

In many parishes in Scotland the office of Boxmaster or Treasurer was not without its disadvantages. There are to be found in all small communities, such as in the rural parishes, those who are ready to put all manner of constructions on one's best intentions and actions. The work of the fault finder is an easy one. Not so that of the one who is ever in the gaze of the whole public community.

But from the entries above quoted, and from frequent references to his "distributions" throughout the Glenbervie Register during the time he was Treasurer, it would seem that James Burness not only justified the confidence reposed in him by the Kirk Session, but also inspired such a trust in his prudence and knowledge of human nature as allowed him to bestow liberally of his own accord out of the

Session funds for the necessitous poor.

We quote the following entries in illustration :—

Given out to sundry poor by Hawkhill,	..	£14	12	2
Hawkhill's expences for going to Aberdeen,		£3	12	0
Disbursed by Hawkhill,	.. ..	£33	8	7

Many more might be given, but these will suffice. While disbursements were made by others of the Kirk Session it is to be remarked that those of Hawkhill generally exceeded the others. Possibly being Treasurer, all vagrants, strangers and others who shared in the bounty of the Kirk in those days might have found their way to Hawkhill in hopes that his pity would be excited, and the appeal of his illustrious descendant "to gently scan his brother-man" being brought forth, he might be induced to advance a dole out of his private purse, to be afterwards reimbursed out of the Kirk Funds. And if this kindly "keeper of the poor" had any of the generous pity and human sympathy for all created beings which was so often shown by the illustrious Bard, one can readily imagine that no deserving suppliant would leave his door empty-handed.

And it was in these circumstances that the Treasurer's knowledge and good sense were brought into play. For, unlike the present mode of distribution, the weekly allowances varied not only from week to week but in different parishes. There was no uniform mode of distribution over all Scotland. Kirk Sessions being dependent, largely on the voluntary collections at the Kirk had just to cut their coat according to their cloth. If the Session had little to give, so much the worse for the poor, and if they were opulent so much the better.

According to the circumstances of the suppliant and the amount of funds in hand, the relief varied, in Glenbervie, from two shillings to a pound, or more, of course Scots money.

Help was not only given in money but in kind. Meal was sometimes given, the amount being from half a peck to a peck every week for each person.

Board was sometimes afforded to foundlings and others, whilst boots, clothes, and other articles of wearing apparel were occasionally given. But whilst the temporal wants of the needy parishioners were thus ministered to, their spiritual needs were also looked after, for an entry dated Nov. 3rd, 1729 indicates that a Bible, costing then £1 4s, was given to David Peel.

## CHAPTER IX.

PENALTIES—MORTCLOTHS—BENEFACTIONS—FEES AND DUES—BELL PENNY—CARENTS—BILLS AND BONDS—SALE OF PAUPERS' EFFECTS.

The present age knows nothing of monetary penalties enacted by Kirk Sessions from moral delinquents. But long ago this formed another source of revenue for the church. In Glenbervie these presumably went into the Treasurer's box along with all the other collections, although in some parishes they had a separate box assigned for their reception, and were often applied to other purposes than the relief of the poor.

The penalty varied with the gravity of the offence. The sum of £8 Scots. appears very often in the list of penalties for Glenbervie. With a laudable zeal for the interests of the poor who benefited by these fines, the Kirk Sessions were most scrupulous in the enactment of them. In the first week of January, 1723, the Kirk Session of Glenbervie ordered their officer to summon all those who were owing penalties to compare before the Session "on Saturday next in order either to pay their penalties or to find sufficient cautionary for them."

The Session Records of Glenbervie show that for the year 1726 the amount of penalties was £27, but from other evidence this would appear to have been a smaller sum than was usually got from this source. In addition to their penalties, parties undergoing church censure had to be rebuked publicly for three successive Sundays before they received "absolution from fornication."

Kirk Sessions would find it a hopeless task to-day to exercise its functions as guardians to the public morals in the manner practised of old, but even one hundred and fifty years ago, when the common penalty for delinquents was, in addition to their "fine," to sit the "stool of repentance," their officer had often to make two or three visits to secure the attendance of culprits before the ecclesiastical tribunal. Human nature resents compulsion, and it appears that in the quiet rural parish of Glenbervie then, some were bold enough to withstand the requests of the Kirk-Session, so much so that the terror of being haled before the Presbytery alone had the effect of making them repent. Some, at least, of the more remote



ancestors of the illustrious bard were in this extremity, and "they not attending, the Session delays to make any further procedure in ye affair till the minister acquaint the Presbytery and have their advice." Evidently the terrors of the Presbyterial jurisdiction had been too much for them, for immediately followed the "representation" of the minister to the Session that "J.B. came to him and payed his penaltie and his parties, and that he had given him a receipt for it."

#### MORTCLOTHS.

Kirk Sessions from a very early period were accustomed to keep one or more mort cloths to be used at funerals by all who could afford to pay for them. These sometimes brought in a considerable sum. The law regarding these has thus been stated, and Kirk Sessions took good care that their privileges should not be undermined either by private individuals or corporations, although, no doubt, in Glenbervie there would be no one to lend out mort cloths in opposition to the Session. "Kirk Sessions, by immemorial usage, may acquire the *exclusive* right of letting out mort cloths to hire within the parish, and of charging certain dues therefor, which are generally appropriated to the use of the poor. Corporations or private associations may, by similar usage, acquire a joint right to let out mortcloths for hire, but, except where such a right has been so acquired, no individual nor association can let out mortcloths to the prejudice of the Kirk Session's privilege. Private individuals may no doubt use mortcloths belonging to themselves, but they cannot lend them out to others even gratuitously; nor it should seem, can a number of individuals subscribe for the purchase of a mortcloth for their joint use, although nothing be charged to each individual on the occasion of its being required, as this would effect an evasion of the privilege of the Kirk Session." There was one in Glenbervie for the use of the parish, and another one was presented to the Kirk Session by Mr Lyall, long in the Mill of Glenbervie.

In the matter of

#### BENEFACTIONS

by pious donors for religious and charitable purposes the parish of Glenbervie has a few, although none of them are of great value. The following are the principal bequests:—1 the Christie bequest, 2 the Reith



bequest, 3 the Charles bequest, 4 the Lawson bequest, 5 the Forrest, 6 the White, 7 the Gordon. The first of these—the Christie—was left by one Alexander Christie, a son of one Thomas Christie, who was sometime a merchant and Provost of Montrose. He married one Margaret Thomson, the eldest daughter of William Thomson, merchant in Drumlithie. She died in August 1787, in the seventy-sixth year of her age, her husband having predeceased her by twenty-one years. To perpetuate her memory and to provide for the poor he left in 1787 first, £25, and in the following year other £25. The interest of this was to be applied principally to “the *aged*—the *distrest* at that time, or those who have *numerous* families—regard being always had—first to any of my own relations, if residing in the parish—next to those of the name of *Thomson*, providing always that such persons be really in indigent circumstances.” Mr Christie seems to have had not only a clear head but a kind heart, and he concluded his letter to Mr Thom, then minister, in these terms: “I hope that what I have so freely and voluntarily given may, by the blessing of God, be of everlasting and essential service to your poor, and I wish health and happiness to you and each individual of your society.”

The Charles Bequest will be noticed further on. The Lawson Bequest was a sum of two hundred pounds, “mortified to ye poor in this parish,” by one William Lawson about 1720.

#### FEES AND DUES.

Fees and Dues in Glenbervie, as in other parts of the country, were exacted from various sources. In the case of marriage there was latterly a graduated scale of three charges payable according as the intending contracting parties were “cried” once twice or thrice. There must have been, however, previously only the one charge, as there was, except in very exceptional cases only one mode of proclamation in Scotland, namely once on each of three consecutive Sabbaths. Of course the fee was not uniform all over Scotland. Local circumstances may have determined it being higher in some parishes than in others. The graduated scale in Glenbervie was 12s 6d for one proclamation; 7s 6d for two; and 4s 6d for three times. Of course this is all altered now. The statutory fee

of 2s 6d of necessity forced Kirk Sessions to reduce their charges to the same level. The graduated scale seems to have arisen from the action of the church in demanding as the price of a favour a higher fee the extra charge as usual going either to benefit the poor or for some other charitable end. Whether legal or not people seem to have considered it just as prudent to pay the higher fee as wait for the proclamation to be carried over three successive Sundays. The kirk officer had also to be paid his dues. In Glenbervie, as elsewhere, these were granted, both at funerals and marriages to the officer. Whether there was ever a fixed charge for his offices on these occasions is doubtful, but, at anyrate, a voluntary contribution was forthcoming which the officer, no doubt, looked upon as his if not by legal sanction, at least, by immemorial usage. This

#### BELL PENNY

as it was called expresses very significantly the purpose for which the dues were paid. It was the duty of the officer to open the kirk door at marriages, and also on sad as well as glad occasions to ring the kirk bell. Even when marriages were discontinued in church the kirk officer was most diligent in demanding his usual perquisites. These were sometimes paid in money, and sometimes in kind, meal being often given. In Glenbervie when the marriage ceremony was completed it was the custom of the officer to pass round the company in anticipation of his usual dues, or, if the marriage was in church, to meet the wedding guests on their departure from the kirk. Previous to marriage it was customary for the contracting parties to give a "bond" or "caution." "The consignation free or bond," says Edgar, "was a pledge of two things—first, that the parties seeking proclamation of banns would proceed in due course to the solemnisation of marriage, and secondly, that they would marry without scandal." The object of exacting the bond seems to have been like most of the other practices of the old Kirk to swell the church's finances, which were devoted as usual either to the use of the poor or other deserving object. If money was not forthcoming it was common in many places to leave rings, plaids, or other article of some considerable value. Very often the name of some mutual friend of the bride and bride-

groom, or other suitable person was given as "cautioner." This seems to have been the regular practice in Glenbervie, in illustration of which we quote a few extracts from the Registers.

"February 8th, 1747. This day William Officer and Ann Spark gave up their names to be proclaimed in order to be married. Cautioner for the man James Beattie, jur., and John Spark for the woman's."

"April 4th, 1747. This day David Beattie in Mary Parish (Marykirk?) and Elizabeth Ross in the parish of Glenbervie gave up their names to be proclaimed in order to be married. Cautioner for them both William Wishart in Mains of Glenbervie."

"The same day John Gavin and Margaret Beattie in this parish gave up their names. Cautioner for the man William Burness in Brawlinmuir, and for the woman, John Watson in Bogtown."

A feature of old church life and work, quite uncommon in our own day, was the granting of bills and bonds out of the accumulated funds of the Kirk. This was quite common all over the country. In Glenbervie these were relatively very large, and the Session seems to have granted bills for very considerable amounts. The interest of these went of course into the exchequer of the Kirk, and was a source of revenue whence the poor or other expenses of the Kirk were as usual paid. Indeed, the Session seems to have been most scrupulous in the enactment of the interest on these, and did not hesitate to threaten those who were dilatory or unwilling to pay with prosecution at the law. On June 12th, 1725, for example, the "Session took into consideration a bond of five hundred merks offered by ye Laird of Glenbervie but would not accept it in ye terms he offered it, wherefor they resolved to commence a legal prosecution and accordingly ordered a letter to be written to ye Laird of Bukkie, and thereby intimate their Resolution." A month later, however, a letter from the Laird was received, which had the effect of making them delay procedure. In March of the following year "the Session gave a discharge to George Gordon, jr. of Bukkie, of two bonds granted by Mr Robert and Thomas Burnett of Glenbervie, and received two bonds, one from the said George Gordon of Bukkie and another from William Nicolson of Glenbervie."

In the following year the Session, apparently with the idea that they were to lose some of the money which they, no doubt remembering the parable of the slothful servant, had put out to usury, "decreed that the Bills belonging to David Walker which were lodged in James Burnes hand, treasurer, should be arrested till payment and satisfaction should be made of the said money to the said Session, and for the better accomplishing of yt elected Andrew Brown treasurer for yt effect." Other entries show that Glenbervie Session had granted "ye carent of 300 merks to Kirk Session of Montrose," and other sums to the Laird of Glenbervie, Viscount Arbuthnott, Mr Burnett of Leys and many others. In connection with the collection of the interest on these one is struck by the immense contrast between the facilities for carrying on business between then and now. Letters had to be written asking when it would be convenient to come and transact the business, whilst the journey, even for a comparatively short distance, must have been a wearisome and fatiguing one. Advantage seems to have been taken by the minister and others who may have attended the synodical meetings of transacting any little piece of kirk buriness which required to be done.

It does not appear that the Glenbervie elders were very ready to dispose of paupers' effects after their decease, although this was done in other parishes. There is only one entry relative to this, and it shows that a "pock" was sold, bringing in the handsome sum of fivepence—certainly a most unexpected proceeding, considering the smallness of the return from the sale. Probably instead of being sold they were distributed in kind, thus avoiding a sale where the goods and chattels to be disposed of were of little account. The consideration of these old Church times may suggest to us a few pertinent reflections. The contrast between the past and the present ecclesiastical life in Scotland, indeed, is very marked. In the past the Church constituted herself the guardian of the poor and the afflicted. She was a kind mother ever ready and eager to help her children. She interested herself not only in their future but also their earthly welfare. Led by men of strong common sense and practical ability, they learned to trust in her. They strove ever to exhibit to the world a picture of that charity and kindliness of heart which prompted them to many a gracious and

kindly deed. Inspired by a glorious past, they strove to uphold the great traditions handed down to them, and to pass on in undiminished splendour the grand heritage left them from their fathers. Are we of the present day fully conscious of that greatness left in our charge? In the past the fiat of the Church was respected by high and low, rich and poor. Has she the same power to-day. We sometimes hear it asserted that the Church (we use the word in its widest sense) has lost and is losing her hold on the people. We do not believe it. On the contrary we believe that she has and will retain that hold so long as she is faithful to her trust and true to herself. True, she does not exert her influence in the way she did of old. But she does it still through many more channels than she possessed then. Was there ever a time when Christian enterprise of all kinds was so vigorous? At what period have Christianising and humanising agencies been more active? When has there been such a wealth of religious literature poured from the press as now? At what period has the spirit of Christianity permeated all the departments of life and work as now. These are the channels through which the Church works to day. But more might be done. The miserable divisions which desolate Zion and are a scandal and disgrace to our common Christianity and Presbyterianism sadly hinder the free progress of the cause of religion amongst us, and give some cause for the Mussulman's remark "Christianity beautiful, Christians a farce." To the ordinary mind there seems to be no iota of difference between the different denominations, and their continued separation can but excite pain and wonder in the hearts of all who observe it. We impute blame to no one, In the past there may have been some reason for this action, but in the present it behoves us to seek for a "more excellent" way, and to cultivate that spirit which, as these few chapters show, these old "keepers of the kirk" in Glenbervie displayed, viz. to seek that charity which envieth not, and thinketh no evil; and if an outward unity is not obtainable let it be over the church at large as it certainly has been and is now in Glenbervie, that we agree to differ, to live and let live, and to be at peace amongst ourselves as becometh those whose creed it is to do unto others as we would wish them to do unto us.



## CHAPTER X.

EXTRACTS FROM OLD REGISTERS—DISCIPLINE—  
SABBATH BREAKING—DRUNKENNESS—THE KIRK  
AND ITS ACCOUNTS—MISCELLANEOUS EXTRACTS.

The old registers of Glenbervie do not extend any further back than the year 1721. In the custody of the Registrar-General there is only one volume. In it the birth entries extend from 1721 to 1819. The first three pages of entries (1721-1748) are very irregular with respect to dates ; and entries many years out of order of time are frequent throughout the record. Mothers' names are not recorded till 1812, and often omitted till 1817. In the "Contracts" or Marriage Book there is a blank from April 1747 till October 1749 and from July 1757 till November 1765. There are only two entries between the years 1775 and 1779, and a blank from 1788 to 1793. There is no record of deaths except eight entries relating to paupers between 1727 and 1752.

The Register of Discipline and Accounts from January 1723 onwards, is also extant, but it also is defective.

It is supposed that the registers previous to those now extant had been destroyed about the year 1715—the time of the first Jacobite rising. Possibly they may have been stowed away in some hidden corner and been forgotten. There is a significant blank also in the entries relating to the years 1745 and 1746, the first entry after that being dated March 15th, 1747.

It is a pity that these old Registers have been lost sight of. They were the only records of the parish life and parish work in the olden time, and in Glenbervie we feel sure that there was then a typical parish. Not only in the widely different circumstances of the parish, then and now, would they have afforded us interesting and instructive reading, but also have given us a glimpse of the social customs, the Kirk's methods and men, the prevailing thought and action in the past, and afforded, moreover, a striking contrast to the life and work of the present day. What remains to us will, in some degree, serve to bring out these particulars and for convenience we may divide the extracts that follow into those relating, (1), to Discipline, (2), Sabbath breaking, (3), Eldership, (4), Accounts, (5) Miscellaneous.

(1), Discipline: To judge from the entries in the registers one would imagine the principal function

of the Kirk Session of Glenbervie to have been the exercise of

#### CHURCH DISCIPLINE

on moral delinquents. The elders, as would appear from the statements in some of the entries, constituted themselves the sentinels, keeping watch over the morals of the parish, and reporting to the "session properly met and constitute" any breach of the church's laws or *fama* that reached their ears. Thereupon the party or parties concerned were duly summoned by the kirk officers to "compear" at the next meeting of Session to answer to the charge laid to them. In many cases some, perhaps stronger minded or self-willed individuals, required two or even three visits from the kirk functionary before they consented to appear, and even then some were so bold as to give no satisfaction to these ecclesiastical inquisitors, and accordingly were handed over to the Presbytery "to be dealt with as they shall see fit."

But the Presbytery, perhaps with the conviction that the Session were better judges of the whole circumstances than they could be, very often referred the case back again to the local tribunal. A confession or conviction on evidence invariably followed this procedure, and the "party" having paid his penalty, made his "appearances on ye stool in sackcloth," and having been "publicly rebuked" was duly "absolved" and restored to church membership and privileges.

The usual penalty paid to the Kirk Session was £8 Scots, but from entries here and there it would appear that the Glenbervie elders then were men of good common sense and discrimination who could temper justice with mercy, as the following extract will show: "4th December, 1726, A. B. and J. W. appeared on the pillar according to order, and were absolved. The Session, considering the necessitous circumstances of the said persons, took only *three* pounds from them as their penalty."

Not only, it would seem, did they concern themselves with a

#### FAMA CLAMOSA

within their own borders, but also with any "subjects" who came with complaints from the neighbouring parishes. On August 1st, 1747, the Session of Glenbervie had under their consideration the "confession" of Elizabeth Cook, a strolling



beggar, sent from the Session of St Cyrus. They duly considered the same, and being evidently determined to mete out even-handed justice to the "stranger within their gates" however mean or poor, "desired the witnesses she adduced to be summoned against the following Sabbath." It was set forth by her that she had been badly treated by "John Pulsan, servitor to the laird of Glenbervie," and as witnesses she cited Alexander Brebner, Elizabeth Watson, and W. Walker. But Sir William Nicolson was jealous of the reputation of his servants and "would not allow his servants to come over so publicly to ye Session." The Session on hearing this, turned themselves for the nonce into a Circuit Court, and sat in judgment on John at the mansion-house. The witnesses on oath swore that "they never saw John Pulsan do any such thing as his accusers alleged, but heard her say that she would be revenged upon the said John Pulsan for *casting water about her.*"

Another case of discipline which, to judge from the long account given of the proceedings in connection with it, must have created some little excitement in the parish is recorded in the year 1762. A *fama* had been noised abroad regarding one M. T., and this report being "very flagrant" in the parish she was ordered to attend a "Committee of Session on Monday next, by two o'clock in the afternoon." But she not appearing, the machinery of the Kirk Session was set in motion to secure evidence regarding the suspected one. Father, mother, brother, and sister of the accused appeared but all denied any knowledge of her, each declaring and substantiating the other that "she had made an elopement from this place upon Wednesday last." The Session and its Moderator brought into play that judgment and discrimination which seems to have characterised them, and, in regard to their declarations "doubting of the veracity thereof as also that of a letter" received from the accused, adjourned the diet to the following week when the witnesses were all to be examined upon oath. But in spite of all these formalities no satisfaction could be got from her or her friends, and the following deliverance was pronounced on her case:

"The Session, having considered the above confession, with the impudence and audaciousness of

her answers, conclude that she is not genuine in her confession, and therefore refers her to the Presbytery." But the Presbytery seemingly thought it would be as hopeless a task for them as it was for the Session to extract the true particulars of her guilt, and accordingly ordered the Moderator "to read the cause of M. T. in Drumlithie, over the pulpit and lay her aside as she was altogether obstinate."

During the first half of the Eighteenth Century persons under church censure made their appearance "on ye stool in sackcloth," but as will appear from an extract in 1762 a change in this respect was made. "The Session agreed, as they had not a sackcloth gown, the garb in which such delinquents as J. S. are wont to make their appearances before the congregation that the said J.S. should make his first appearance on the stool next Lord's Day in a linting sheet. J.S. being called compeared and being informed in what manner he was to make his appearance before the congregation was suitably exhorted to repentance."

Although the case of M.T., quoted above, shows that the Session had sometimes "kittle cattle" to deal with, yet there were others brought before them who exhibited a seemingly sincere outward repentance, and whose nature was more pliable and open to the persuasive words of the moderator of the Session. One J. W. who was forced to confront the ecclesiastical superiors of the parish, "faintly denied his guilt, but being dealt with to be ingenuous; the danger of denying the guilt, and the fatal consequence that might attend it, together with the dreadful effects of the divine vengeance he thereby must needs incur, by adding perjury to adultery, being clearly pointed out, he then with tears, confessed his guilt," and being suitably exhorted to repentance was referred to the Presbytery, which then usually met at Bervie.

That part of the punishment meted out to moral wrong-doers, which enforced their

#### APPEARANCE ON THE STOOL

in full view of the congregation, seems in Glenbervie at least, to have carried with it a sense of shame and reproach. It was the exception, however, for any one to escape, either this, or the infliction of the eight pounds Scots paid as a fine.

But as an extract dated July 8th 1764 will show, there was one conscience-stricken member of the congregation so overcome by a sense of shame for his guilt that he requested the "indulgence of sitting in his father's seat when making appearance." The Session duly considered the penitent's petition and granted the prayer of it, but the special favour thus granted was only given on condition that a double penalty be handed over to the funds of the church treasurer.

Thus we see that whilst the keepers of the kirk could, as occasion required in necessitous cases, remit part or all of the penalty exacted, they had also a shrewd and business-like capacity for permitting no breach of the kirk's regulations, except it was for the good of their funds.

Many more extracts relating to the practice of the kirk might have been given, but they possess no special feature of interest. The remarks made on the cases reported in the registers varied indeed very little, although in many there is a scrupulous and somewhat forbidding amount of detail which is plainly suggestive of a miserable half hour for the culprits arraigned at the ecclesiastical bar. In this as in other respects the practice of the church has changed. She still, it is true, carries out her discipline, but no public appearance is demanded and no penalty enforced.

(2.) Sabbath Breaking :—The question is often asked now-a-days "Are we sufficiently strict in our observance of the Sabbath"? Now and again our Presbyteries, Synods, and Assemblies are exercised over their reports on Religion and Morals, and the question of the due

#### OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.

Certainly the views on this and similar questions have considerably widened during the last half century, and to-day things are done on the Sabbath day which the church takes no special notice of but which would have shocked the feelings and prejudices of the Kirk a century ago, and brought down upon the unfortunate Sabbath breaker an inquisitorial examination and censure at the hands of the stalwart champions of the Kirk and her laws. In this, as in other respects, the truth would seem to lie in the golden mean. The church in olden times perhaps was too strict in her ideas of Sabbath keeping, and respected the letter more than the spirit, but may it not be that we are going to the

opposite extreme, and violating both the spirit and the letter? In Glenbervie at any rate, a due observance of the Sabbath was rigidly demanded. The entries relating to Sabbath breaking are not many, but they are significant.

The Church has no power now to deal with cases of drunkenness, except through her precept and example, but the Kirk Session of the parish in 1724 not only looked upon it as a "sin" but also administered reproof for the forgetfulness of any one in this respect, as the following extract will show: "April 7th, the Session met and constitute by prayer, D. M. in Jacksbank, compierd and acknowledged his sin in being guilty of drunkenness on ye Lord's day, and was appointed to compier before ye congregation next Sabbath to be publickly rebuked for ye same."

But less heinous offences than drunkenness came under the church's censure. The Shorter Catechism lays it down that only works of "necessity and mercy" are to be engaged in on the Sabbath, and apparently the Kirk-Session of Glenbervie had considered the shearing of a few handfuls of grass on the Sabbath, to be none of these.

At the meeting of the Session on 13th July, 1760, one of the elders reported that "it was current in the parish that a servant of James Scott in Tannaehy, or other of their members was guilty of Sabbath breaking by

#### SHEARING GRASS

upon the sixth instant." A week had only elapsed before the Sabbath breaker was thus brought to book for his alleged misdeeds, and ordered to appear before the Session. That this meeting was considered of more than ordinary importance is attested by the fact that the full sederunt is mentioned in the record, which was not usually done. The evidence adduced is so full and so curiously put, that we here give the record of one of the witnesses entire.

"Compeared Alexr. Walker, jnn., in Buekie's Mill according to a citation given him by order of the Session, an unmarried man aged thirty years and upwards, *being purged of envy, malice, and corruption*, depones that upon the Sabbath's night, the sixth instant, he saw John Roe, servt to James Scott in Tannaehy, taking up a bundle of grass upon a balk in the Bank of Tannaehy and going a little up the said balk and laid it down, taking up more grass, and took it up again, and

went away with it towards his master's house so far as he could deccrn, and that he did not see him shearing any grass. The deponent being interrogate what time of the night it was, answered that he could not fix upon an hour, but according to his knowledge it was *before the twelfth hour* said night. *Causa scientiæ patet* and this is truth as the Deponent shall answer to God. *sic subscribitur.*"

Other two witnesses appeared and gave similar evidence, whilst John Roe, the Sabbath-breaking servant, also affirmed that he did shear the grass, and did carry home the said grass in a birn when shorn, for the use of his master's horses, and that he was ordered by the said James Scott to go and shear the grass in the time he was taking his supper, in presence of James Scot's wife, George Napier, Margaret Bennet, and Magdalen Scott, and that after shearing and bringing home the grass he immediately went to his bed."

The Session sat in solemn judgment on the depositions, but realising that the honour of the Kirk and one of its "pillars" was at stake, (for the said James Scott was one of the elders) thought an adjournment to give time for reflection would be advisable, and accordingly agreed to meet again at the Kirk the following "*Saturday by six o'clock in the morning.*" A division of opinion there seems to have been on the question, but it was agreed by a "majority of votes that James Scott of Tannachy was not guilty of *wilful* breach of Sabbath, and thought he should be continued in his office."

Another form of

#### SABBATH DESECRATION

which was taken notice of in Glenbervie was the talk that went on round the Kirk door every Sunday morning on subjects connected with their worldly employment.

It is quite a familiar circumstance for many in the rural congregations yet to assemble some time before service, and on such occasions the talk is not wholly given up to religious discussions. The weather, the state of the crops, or the latest bit of parish gossip serves as subject of interesting, if not always useful, talk. On such occasions it has even been hinted that a good bargain has been almost if not wholly completed. The opportunities of meeting each other, more than a century ago, were very limited; and seemingly the good people of Glenbervie had then selected "the assembling of

themselves together," as a convenient time for the discussion of their worldly affairs, and perhaps in the ardour of their talk they had forgot the respect due to the Lord's day, and thus called for the intervention of the keepers of the Kirk. At any rate the Session thought that the reading of the word would be more profitable, and "resolved *nemine contradicente* to buy a Bible that the precentor might read to the congregation before sermon on the Lord's Day, in order to divert the people from discoursing about their secular employments."

It may not be generally known that the reason for the ringing of the bell an hour before service, as is yet quite common in many places, was to summon the worldly-minded worshippers to the reading mentioned above, the earlier bell in the morning, also in use yet, being intended to rouse them from their slumbers.

Another custom in the parish which came under the notice of the Session at this time was connected with

#### MARRIAGE.

The favourite day for the ceremony seems to have been Saturday or Sunday, and on the Sunday there was a kirking not at the church only, but also in the alehouses, where we suppose the health of the newly-wedded pair would be duly given and honoured.

The Kirk-Session did not lay down any special prohibition of this, but resolved (July 1763) "to discountenance marryings on Saturday and kirkings in alehouses on Sundays for the future, as much as lay in their power."

This mild request and protest by the Session seems to have been somewhat disregarded, for in November 1765, two years later, "the Session having taken under their consideration the tendency that marriages on the Lord's Day had to the prophanation of said day, enacted that no marriages for the future should be solemnised upon the Lord's Day in this parish, and if any person should insist upon having marriage said day, they would oblige themselves to be betwixt the minister and all danger for refusing to marry any person on said day."

In connection with this subject of Sabbath keeping it is interesting to note that at the Manse of Glenberrie there is an open space (immediately to the west of it, and adjoining the public right-of-



way from the Manse to the mill) which goes by the name of

#### THE BUTTS.

There can be no doubt that this marks the spot where on Sundays and other days the people were wont to assemble and practise their feats of archery and other sports in the olden days.

(4) *Disbursements*—We have already seen what the Sessions in olden times did with the very considerable funds at their command. The care of the poor and the promotion of education were two main features of their work. But these by no means exhausted the spending resources of these old parish guardians. Their expenditure was spread over almost every conceivable deserving object in the parish. They provided for the living as well as for the dead; the widow and the orphan did not appeal to them in vain; the vagrant, the suppliant, and the stranger did not pass by their door unprovided for. And yet, withal, they were men, as we have seen, of sound judgment, clear discrimination, and sensible actions, who were not easily imposed upon, and who watched with a jealous eye over the interests committed to their charge.

We feel sure from our study of the old Glenbervie records that the following sentence spoken of these kirkmen in general applied with equal force to those we have been speaking of. "Not harsh and hard-hearted men were these old ministers and elders whose doings we have been criticising, but men of as true kindness, as burning a zeal for God, and as ripe Christian understanding as the best of ourselves. All honour to their names, and may their works follow them."

The following extracts taken from the account books of the parish will perhaps be of interest to many, as showing the many and varied applications of the Glenbervie parish kirk funds. Those given were disbursed between 1723 and 1772, and may be taken as typical of many more that might be adduced:—

To a Stranger, .. .. .	£0	6	0
To the Burse (Bursar).. ..	4	0	0

This was the Bursar maintained by the Presbytery, each congregation, as already mentioned, paying a proportional share.

To Cups at the Sacrament, .. .. .	0	6	0
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From the frequent entries of the above it is apparent that Glenbervie had no communion vessels, and consequently the loan of these had to be got from the neighbouring parish of Fordoun. Six shillings (Scots) is the price stated, but several years later, about the third quarter of the eighteenth century, two shillings is the price paid for the loan of them. In 1781 the Session agreed to purchase plates for the communion breads and a basin for the baptisms—communion cups were also got in 1780. The law regarding the sacrament of baptism in the church is that it should be performed in the public place of worship, and the fact that a bason was got presumably implies that it was carried out publicly in Glenbervie, whenever it was possible to do so.

To James Cumming for to buy shirts, .. £1 16 0

To a coffin to J. W., .. .. 0 12 0

The very next entry to the above, relating to the purchase of a coffin puts the price at £2. The price of a coffin and winding sheet supplied by the Kirk was £3 5s.

To Adam Greig for windows, .. .. £0 18 0

To the Clerk's Fee, .. .. 6 13 4

To another poor person, .. .. 0 7 0

The last two are consecutive entries, and we cannot but think that the Session-Clerk in recording them must have had a spark of humour in his composition, or perhaps wanted to convey a quiet hint to the Session that an increase of salary for his services as clerk would be acceptable.

Charge arrestment of James Craig's corn to

William Black, .. .. £0 6 0

To shoes of two children to J. H., .. .. 1 4 0

To thatch to Margt. Martine's house, .. 0 3 0

To vagrant beggars, .. .. 0 13 0

The entries relative to "beggars" specify them as "vagrant," common, "staff," or "cripple."

Given to the Presbytery for propagating

human knowledge, .. .. £5 9 0

To a precept, .. .. 0 12 0

For the sclatter, .. .. 0 12 0

To J. W's. dead cloaths, .. .. 1 0 0

To A. G's. shoes, .. .. 1 4 0

To a supplicant, .. .. 0 8 10

To John Brand for shoes mending, .. 0 8 0

To Robert Clark for making a poor man's grave, .. .. 0 6 8

To Session-Clerk for making up the Session Book, .. .. 3 6 8

For the Bell, .. .. .	50	10	6
To the Poor at the Sacrament, .. ..	14	3	0
To Hawkhill for building a house to Margaret Martin, the house his own, ..	2	0	0
To James Ritchie, a fool boy in Cotbank, ..	3	0	
To ye foundling from ye 15th of February, to ye 25th of May, .. .. .	6	6	0
<i>Eodem die</i> to buy cloaks to ye foundling, ..	2	2	0
To buy shirts and shoes to ye foundling, ..	0	18	0
To James Ritchie to mend his cloaths, ..	0	13	4
To a cripple woman in great distress, ..	1	4	0
To James Burness, Boxmaster, for Disbursements out of his own pocket, .. ..	5	10	0

This is only one of a great many similar, showing that James Burness had exercised a large discretion as to granting occasional relief without the express sanction of the session

To a blasted woman, .. .. .	0	12	0
To an object, .. .. .	0	4	0
To an indigent gentlewoman, .. .. .	0	12	0
To a dumb man, .. .. .	0	4	0
To buy a Bible to David Peel, .. ..	1	4	0
To a woman cut of a cancer in ye Parish of Fordoun, .. .. .	1	12	0
To a man in ye Parish of Fordoun whose eye was cut of a cataract, .. ..	0	2	0
To help up with a Bridge in ye Parish of Benholm, .. .. .	1	0	0
For a sand glass, .. .. .	0	6	0

The mention of the sand glass recalls to one's mind the time when preachers were very literally described as "painful"—perhaps in the modern sense it was so for both preacher and hearer. One or two turns of the sand glass would induce a soporific tendency in the hearers, but we have no mention of "the awakening rod" having been brought into requisition in Glenbervie as it is said to have been elsewhere.

To buy a Session Book, .. .. .	£3	0	0
To ye up-pulling of a bridge over ye water of Cowie, .. .. .	3	0	0
To James Burness for being precentor, ..	0	11	1½
To a bridge in Glenesk in ye Parish of Lochlee, .. .. .	0	6	0

The obligations of the Kirk Session in those days were seemingly not confined to the building or pulling-up of bridges in their own county. Perhaps some of the hill roads were connected with this bridge, and so the Session had felt called upon to assist in raising it.

The following entries have reference to a new mortcloth which was got in 1757.

To William Baird for dressing $8\frac{3}{4}$ yards of velvet and a fringe, .. ..	£0	4	0
To 6 dropes black silk at 2d per drop, and 3 white do., .. ..	0	1	9
To $8\frac{3}{4}$ yards of cotton velvet for a mortcloth, 10s per yard, .. ..	4	7	6
To 6 yards white Persian at 2s 3d per yard, ..	0	13	6
To $5\frac{3}{4}$ yards shalloon at 1s 8d per yard, ..	0	9	7
To $\frac{1}{2}$ yard buckram, .. ..	0	0	5
To James Jolly, Taylor in Drumlithy, for making the mortcloth, .. ..	1	7	0

Though of no outstanding interest these entries are useful as showing us the price of materials then.

To a fund to be raised for encouraging students to preach (—?), .. ..	£0	7	$4\frac{3}{4}$
To Robert Glegg, smith in Drumlithie, for the poor, .. ..	0	2	6

This shows us that there were in Glenbervie as in the neighbouring parishes “licensed” beggars. These licenses or badges were granted to poor people, and this allowed them to beg with impunity. One of the Glenbervie badges is now in the possession of Mr John Milne, Auchinblae, an intelligent and enthusiastie collector of antiques. This system had even legal sanction. An act of 1672 directed Kirk Sessions “to condescend on such as, through age and infirmity, are not able to work, and appoint them places wherein to abide, that they may be supplied by the contributions at the parish kirk, and gif the same be not sufficient to entertain them, that they give them a badge or ticket to ask alms at the dwelling houses of the inhabitants of their own paroch only, without the bounds whereof they are not to beg.” These badges, besides giving licence, were, in the emphatic words of the olden days, a means of “discovering them from strangers and idle vagabonds.”

To transporting an object to Stenhaven, ..	£0	1	0
To renewing the old tokens, .. ..	0	1	0
To twenty-one dozen new ones, .. ..	0	3	6
By the Postage of a Letter, .. ..	0	0	2
By the Balance of a Church Laver, .. ..	0	2	1
By Appreciating the Wood in Kirkyaird, ..	0	2	0
By Powder for Riving Stones for Do., ..	0	0	8
By Crying Roup of the Timber (presumably the Wood of the Kirkyard mentioned above), .. ..	0	0	8

By J. C. in Newbigging lent him to Buy a Cow, which Cow is the Session's property, but continued with J. C. for some time for the support of his family, he being a poor man, .. .. 2 0 0  
 By Tipets and Mutches to Orphan's Nurse, 0 1 6  
 By a dorment to the Loft,, .. .. 0 4 0  
 By Twelve Yards of Linen, being Cloth for the Communion Table, .. .. 1 8 11½  
 This gives us almost 2s 6d as the price of a yard of linen one hundred and twenty years ago.

*Miscellaneous Extracts*—(1) Seat rents :—It was the custom long ago in Glenbervie to let the

#### SEATS IN THE KIRK.

These went then by the expressive name of "rooms." Whether this was legal or not, it is for those "learned in the law" to say, but at any rate the kirk was partitioned off by distinctive names corresponding, as was and is the custom, to the different districts of the parish. Indeed, there are extracts which bear out that there was on the part of many of the parishioners a keen desire to obtain a particular seat, or seats, but the Session most rigidly demanded "evidences" before they admitted the claim.

In response to an invitation from the pulpit to lay claim to "Dasks" in the kirk, James Lawrence in Easttown, and Robert Spark in Broombank, appeared, and because they had "acts of session" in their favour, they were allowed seats in the kirk "without payment."

The seat rents varied with the position of the seat in the kirk. "The Session lays on half a merk Scotts to be pay'd for each room in ye Dasks in ye body of ye church, except John Greig's which is only a groat per room. Likeways on ye loft 4 shills Scots for each room in ye breasts of it, and 2 shills Scots, for each room over ye whole of ye rest of it."

Evidently it had never occurred to the Session of old to distinguish a seat by a number, as the descriptions of them in the records laboured and wonderfully minute, still show.

Here are a few.

"Robert Roe in Kinmonth, Dr. for a room in the Bigg Seat under the Loft with its back to the wall"; "Long Dask, alias Couden's Dask, containing 5 persons"; "Crooked Dask, including yt., under ye stair, containing 7 persons."

There were in Glenbervie, as in most parish kirks, a number of seats expressly set aside for the poor,

and for right to these as to others, proof had to be forthcoming as the following extract shows. "If any person laid claim to any of ye dasks, commonly called ye poors' Dasks, and yt. stand in the body of ye church to produce their evidences before ye Session by ten of ye clock before noon on Saturday next."

(2) *Scandals*—Human nature, it has been truly said, is the same in all ages. The man who lived hundreds of years ago is as the man who lives to-day. He had the same virtues and the same vices, the same love and the same hatred, the same failings and weaknesses which characterise human nature to-day. The

#### TONGUE OF SLANDER

was busy in the olden time as now. The outward expression or manifestation was perhaps different, but the essence of the spirit that prompted it then was the same as now. To-day redress for slander can be got through the legal tribunals of the land, but in the olden time the Church undertook to deal with the slanderer and the scandal-monger, as the following resolution of Glenbervie Kirk-Session of the year 1723 will show.

"The Session having met and constitute enacted that every one who raised a scandal should either pledge four pounds Scotts, in yc hands of their Boxmaster, or else find sufficient security therefor either by Bill, Bond or Cautionry, ay, and until they should prove ye scandal and then upon probation the scandalized person should incur ye said mulct besides being lyable to Church censure, and satisfaction to ye injured. But in case of not probation the scandalizer should forfeit ye said sum, besides satisfaction to ye scandalized and Church censure, according as ye Session should think most suitable."

The Session thus constituted itself a final Court of Appeal, but the sentence to which scandalizers were liable seems to have acted as an effective deterrent for no record can be afterwards found of any who were hauled before the local ecclesiastical judges for unjustly raising a *fama* regarding their neighbours.

In the same year the session agreed with John Edward, square wright, for the value of eleven pounds Scotts, "to build a pillory and a dask before Couden's dask in ye east end of yc Church

before ye crooked dask under Glenbervie's loft, the timber and nails being his own."

In 1758, in accordance with a resolution of the Justices of the Peace for the county with respect to the poor, the session proceeded to draw up a list of those in receipt of relief within the parish, and these were divided into four classes—(1) of infants having parents, eleven; (2) of bedridden necessitous poor, eleven; (3) of poor able to assist in their maintenance, fifteen; (4) badge beggars.

In 1761 the Session enacted that the tokens are to be distributed for the future according to the Examining Roll, and that no person is to be admitted to the tables unexamined "unless they can give a rellavent reason for their non-attendance." The course of examination was ordered to begin "precisely about Martinmas and to continue for six weeks each year, so that every person may have an opportunity of attending one or other of the diets."

The Kirk of Glenbervie in the eighteenth century was considered too small for the number of worshippers, and at length in 1798 an enlargement was resolved upon. This was carried out, but another defect at this time was also repaired, viz., the

#### SCARCITY OF ELDERS.

It was matter of common talk over the parish that the number was too few to effectively look after the interests of the poor, and to perform all other duties incidental to the eldership. Accordingly an election of several approved men was made, and these very soon made their influence felt in a radical change in the matter of discipline. Henceforth it was enacted that public rebuke for scandal should be abolished as the following will show. "The Session after reasoning upon the matter, agreed that the two persons" (previously mentioned) "as well as all fornicators in time coming should be reprimanded privately, and in their presence only, and if they so choose, absolved, upon paying one pound stg., for the benefit of the poor, and ordered their clerk to enter said resolution in the minutes accordingly."



## CHAPTER XI.

## SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLMASTERS.

Scotland has reason to be proud of her educational system. For more than two centuries, thanks to the wisdom and fore-sight of Knox and the

## EARLY REFORMERS,

she has enjoyed a system of education at once the admiration and envy of the world. The Reformers laid great store on education. And the educational zeal of the early Reformers was not hard to understand. They had overthrown a Church which, in their estimation, owed its existence and continuance to ignorance, and hence nothing was so helpful to the advancement of their cause as general education and enlightenment of the masses.

In the first Book of Discipline it is accordingly asserted by Knox and his colleagues that in every considerable parish there should be a school and a schoolmaster fit to teach the grammar and the Latin tongue, and that in small parishes the minister or reader should take care that the young "be instructed in the first rudiments, especially in the catechisme, as we have it now translated in the Booke of the Common Order."

The history of

## SCOTTISH EDUCATION

may be divided roughly into three periods, and for the better understanding of the remarks on the schools and schoolmasters of Glenbervie, we shall, as we proceed, make some general remarks on the characteristics of each period.

The first period lasted from 1560 to 1633, that is from the Reformation to almost the middle of the 17th century; the second from 1633 to 1872 when the Compulsory Education Act came into force; and the third from that period onwards to the present time.

During the first of these periods the control of education was entirely in the hands of the church, and consequently may be called the

## CHURCH PERIOD.

All provision for the maintenance of schools and schoolmasters was made by the Church through her Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirk Sessions. During the second period the heritors of the different parishes were conjoined with the ministers in the in the oversight of the educational system. The

State thus stepped in, and was associated with the Church in the maintenance and establishment of schools for the young. This may be called the

#### CHURCH AND STATE PERIOD.

The third period, in which we at present are, is remarkable for the assumption by the State of the duties of providing and maintaining for the educational needs of the country and consequently may be called the

#### STATE PERIOD.

During the first or Church period, there is little to be learned regarding the educational history of Glenbervie. It is just possible that the people of the parish were indebted to their ministers for whatever instruction they got. The Kirk Session Records do not extend so far back as that time, but from Scott's *Fasts* we learn that the parish was supplied in 1567 with one "John Auchinleck Reader."

Now, in those days it was no uncommon thing for a minister or reader to conjoin with his sacred office, that of schoolmaster. And from the minister's point of view this was no doubt a wise arrangement, for the salary attached to the reader's office in those days was not large. Consequently he could increase his stipend by instructing the young. Three years after Auchinleck's settlement in Glenbervie his place was taken by John Christeson, who came from Fetteresso, and had also charge of Dunnottar. His stipend from Glenbervie was £8 10s 4½d, along with the Kirk lands. He continued at Glenbervie till 1580.

Whether this assumption be true or not in the case of Glenbervie, there is historical evidence that in other parts of the country, the church acting on the instructions of her Assembly, was prepared to enquire into the qualifications of her readers, and hence visitations of parishes were from time to time made by ecclesiastical appointment.

Besides, at this time, the Church had petitioned the Sovereign to be allowed to superintend the schools, so that none might be allowed as instructors of youth, except such as were found by the Kirk to be sound and able in doctrine.

At that time also, as we learn from the Second Book of Discipline, the term "Clergy" included not only ministers, but "schuile-maisters also, quhilk aucht and may be weil sustentit of the same

gudes" that is the teinds, where these could be got.

The school in those days was situated probably at Drumlithie, where it is to-day. One would expect that it would have been nearer the kirk, as was the custom in old times. The phrase the "school at the kirk" occurs often in kirk-session and presbytery records, and was, no doubt, intended to define the locality of a school proposed to be built.

The phrase is thus explained by Dr Edgar in his valuable book on the Kirk:—"It means that the school is not to be built in some outlying district of the parish, or in some upstart village making pretension to be considered the head centre of the parish, but at the old constitutional place of convention, where on Sunday all the parishioners meet for instruction in doctrine, and on week days for being heckled on the question book."

And that the minister and heritors of Glenbervie thought that it ought to be at the Kirk will appear from the following extract regarding one of those ecclesiastical visitations already referred to.

The Kirk of Glenbervie was visited by "my Lord Archbishop of St Andrews and remanent members thereof" on June 1, 1681, the Rev. Robert Irvine being minister.

"Being asked concerning their schoolmaster answered that they had one who had a competent maintenance; and were satisfied with his carriage and attendance on his calling, and that *they were about to bring the school from Drumlithie to the Kirk.*" The schoolmaster at this time was one

JOHN GEORGE,

and according to an account given was said to "acquiesce in present church government." The removal of the school from the village does not appear to have been carried out, although in the year 1723, and the following year, there occurs the phrase "schoolmaster *at* Glenbervie," regarding two schoolmasters who were each appointed Session Clerk.

Who he was or how long he remained schoolmaster at Glenbervie, we have now no means of knowing, but forty years later we come upon the appointment of Mr John Sime, schoolmaster at Glenbervie, as Session Clerk. For this office his salary as appears from the list of disbursements was £3 6s 8d, although we cannot give anything but a mere conjecture as to his stipend as schoolmaster. Evidently the duties of the kirk officer

were held in higher estimation by the Kirk Session than those of Session Clerk, for we find that the former received £4 in addition to the fees commonly given at that time to the officer either in money or kind.

In 1667 the various Presbyteries were required to send up to the Archbishop of St Andrews the names of the various schoolmasters under their jurisdiction for his license to teach.

Previous to 1696 the salary of the schoolmaster was commonly provided for by the kirk, but subsequent to that it was ordained that the "heritors in every parish meet and settle and modify a salary to a schoolmaster which shall not be less than one hundred merks, nor above two hundred." Assuming the stipend to have been a fair average between these two extremes, he would have received from the heritors about £8 sterling. Of course there were the fees and other "casualties which formerly belonged to the readers and the clerks of the Kirk-Session," also to be included in the total emoluments.

The next schoolmaster that we find mention of was one

ROBERT WRIGHT.

He was appointed Session Clerk on June 12th, 1725, and continued in these offices till at least the year 1730. After him there was Patrick Tod, who, as usual, filled the offices of Session Clerk as well as teacher, but regarding him nothing else is known.

Not only did Kirk-Sessions look after the elementary education of their own parish, but they also did something in the way of giving the lad of

"PREGNANT PAIRTS"

the means of reaching the University.

In 1645 the General Assembly made a law that every Presbytery consisting of twelve Kirks should provide a bursar every year at the college—that the bursar should have at least £100 Scots a year—that the provision for the bursar should be "taken forth of the Kirk penalties," and that the sum required for his maintenance at college should be raised by a proportional stent of the several Kirks in the Presbytery, according to the number of the communicants. Where a Kirk was without spot or blemish, there consequently could be nothing for him, if his bursary was to come out of the penalties exacted.

The stent imposed on Glenbervie was £4 Scots per annum, and this sum appears over and over again in the list of disbursements, as having been paid to "Mr Thomas Ogilvie, Presbytery bursar." He was "Chaplain at Glenbervie," and on May 31st, 1724, was elected Session Clerk, as the following extract shows:—"The Session met, and after prayer Mr Thomas Ogilvie, Chaplain at Glenbervie, was chosen Session Clerk, having promised secrecy as to everything transacted in ye Session." He must have satisfied the Presbytery as to his diligence and progress, for during three successive years at least, he was the recipient of their bounty. And we may assume that the Presbytery of Fordoun would loyally carry out the injunctions of the General Assembly of 1705, and "appoint a Committee of their number, yearly to examine . . . such within their bounds as go to Colleges with an eye to bursaries, and suffer none to proceed but such as are very forward, and good proficient, and of good behaviour; and that ministers reeommend none to bursaries but such as are well qualified."

Other two bursars mentioned in the Glenbervie Records are a Mr Pyott, and one David Burn.

In addition to the fixed stipend of the heritors the schoolmaster received the school fees. These were fixed by the Kirk Session and heritors. But in 1803 an act was passed by which the fees were to be fixed by the minister and heritors from time to time, but at intervals of not less than twenty-five years.

Towards the end of the Eighteenth Century the fees exacted in Glenbervie, were, per quarter, for English and writing, 1s 6d; for arithmetic, 2s; and for Latin, 2s 6d.

These charges certainly appear very moderate, and yet we are told on good authority that "Even much of these small fees are not paid, so that the yearly amount of the fees is commonly much less than what one would expect from the number of scholars." No doubt there would be some then, as now, unable to pay for their children's education, and it may be asked were these left untaught. The Kirk Session in such cases were accustomed to pay for their education, and entries to that effect occur in the records of the parish.

In addition to a salary, the schoolmaster had, as was usual, a dwelling-house, and it would appear

from Sinclair's Statistical Account that "a new schoolhouse and a dwelling-house for the master" had about 1790 been built. This one, known as the old parish school, was removed at the alteration and extension of the present parish school. The number of scholars in average attendance then was about 10. The teacher had the maximum salary of 200 merks, and with the fees and other emoluments amounting to over £20 made a total living of over £45, which contrasted favourably with others in the county similarly situated.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the schoolmaster of the parish was the

REV. MR CHARLES.

He was born at Laurencekirk in 1769. He studied at Marischal College, Aberdeen, where he graduated in 1792. He acted as schoolmaster in Glenbervie till 1821, when he was ordained as assistant and successor to the minister of Garvock. It was not till 1836, however, that he entered on the full charge of the parish. He lived till 1868, dying on the 17th Nov., of that year, in the ninety-ninth year of his age. Mr Charles was distinguished for his strong attachment to Presbyterian principles, and in support of these, published in 1855, "The Protestant's Handbook." He was not unmindful either of his native parish or of the one in which he was so long schoolmaster. To the Kirk Session of Laurencekirk he left £50 for the education of poor children in the parish, and a similar sum to the Kirk Session of Glenbervie for a like purpose. This was managed by the School Board of Glenbervie after the passing of the 1872 Act, and now again, since all elementary education is free, it has reverted into the hands of the minister and Kirk-Session, who apply the interest of the bequest to the promotion of the principles of religion amongst the young people of the parish, in accordance with the expressed will of the testator.

Mr Charles was succeeded by

MR ROBERT HENRY,

who was born at Corsebauld in the neighbouring parish of Fordoun. His father and brother were for a long time tenants of that farm. In connection with the Ten Years' Conflict which culminated in the Disruption his brother David became famous. He was educated for the ministry, and became the



clect of the congregation of Marnoch, who rejected the nominee of the patron. Mr Henry of Glenbervie is said to have been a man of gentle temperament and unpretending nature. When he gave up teaching he returned to his native parish, where he spent the remainder of his days.

Mr Henry's successor was the

REV. GEORGE MAIN, M.A.,

who was chosen as schoolmaster by the heritors in 1861. Mr Main graduated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, having been a student under the famous Dr Melvin. He was the last of the parochial teachers of Glenbervie, and for more than twenty years was a faithful and able teacher. Many of his pupils have risen to good positions. He occasionally preached in neighbouring parishes, being a licentiate of the Church of Scotland, as many of the old parochial teachers of Scotland were. It was whilst away officiating thus that he contracted a cold which developed into chronic-rheumatism, and thus occasioned his retiral from active work. He retired in 1882, on a pension granted him by the School Board, and now lives in the village of Auchinblae.

The later schoolmasters have been—(1) John Rose, M.A., (1882-1888) ; (2) George Henderson Kinnear, (1888).

In addition to the parish school, there was a small adventure school carried on under a succession of teachers at the hamlet of Tannochoy. After the passing of the Education Act in 1872, another school was built by the School Board at Lawgaven. The scholars attending it are drawn from the upper districts of the parish. The average number in attendance is about 40. Teachers since its commencement :—(1) Thomas Mitchell, (2) David Jamie, (3) Alexander Duthie, (4) Archibald Wilson, (5) Alexander Clark.

A contrast between the past and present state of education may fittingly be drawn here.

The *State Period* which dates from 1872 has now run for almost a quarter of a century, and many educational changes have taken place during that time.

For the first few years after the passing of the Act the new administrative body—the School Board—in most parishes had to set about getting the statutory accommodation for the influx of

scholars who previously had come and gone to school at their own sweet will, but who now were swept into the net of the compulsory officer. Indeed, it might truly be said that the sound of the instructor's voice could not be heard above the noise of the workman's hammer. Buildings consequently were raised in many cases at great expense, and proved worthy temples for the instruction of childhood. What a strange contrast was afforded between these and the dingy, dark, and often damp hovels into which the children of the parish were crowded! Many of the elementary schools now would have been accounted good enough for colleges and seminaries of the higher branches of learning. The bright, cheery, warm, and well-ventilated schoolrooms of the present day have an inspiring effect on both teachers and taught, and this is as it should be, considering the vastly different conditions under which the present-day education is carried on. The demands on both teacher and taught are greater; the standard of attainment is raised; the work must be more skilfully and methodically carried through. Instead of the modicum of reading, writing, and arithmetic, which formed the staple of the intellectual food of the schools of old, we have now a multiplicity of subjects which crave the attention of the pupils.

But with all the boasted advantages of our compulsory system, it is not to be denied that it brought in its train, many disadvantages which were absent from the excellent parochial system. That the old parochial schoolmasters of Scotland did a noble work for their country, is not to be denied, but it must be remembered that there was an elasticity in their system, which left them free to develop the bent of the individual child. They were not "cribbed, cabined, and confined" by rules and regulations, as the code-driven teacher of the present day. With the advent of the compulsory system came also the vicious and hurtful method of payment by results on the individual passes, which all thinking men now admit to be wrong, but which probably suggested itself to the mind of its author, Mr Robert Lowe (afterwards Lord Sherbrooke), as the most practical method of satisfying the British public that it was getting full value for its money. It has, however, been said on authority that a higher hand than Mr Lowe's was responsible for this—one of the most eminent

statesmen of the century, then a colleague of Mr Lowe's.

But wiser councils now prevail. The long dreary march through the uninviting educational wilderness is nearly at an end, and both teachers and taught are now within reach of the Promised Land, which, if it does not yield abundant supplies of intellectual milk and honey will, at least, afford to the youthful educational pilgrims of the next generation a refreshing attraction and interest denied to their predecessors during the first two decades of the compulsory period.

The contrast in the manner and methods of the inspection of schools then and now, is also very striking. Prior to the passing of the Education Act of 1872, it is well known that nearly all the schools in the country were inspected annually by a committee of the Presbytery. As long ago as 1595 Presbyteries were enjoined by the General Assembly "to take order for visitation and reformation of grammar schooles in touns within their bounds; and to appoint some of their counsell to attend carefullie on their schooles and to assist the maister in discipline."

This visitation of the parish school was esteemed by many ministers an important part of their work, and by none more so than the parish ministers of Glenbervie during the last hundred years. Though it is not to be denied that the inspection by the Presbytery was less skilful and thorough than under the present system by the inspectors of the Education Department, nevertheless they were to many a pleasant time, and in the majority of cases had a beneficial effect on the character and discipline of the school.

The elderly people amongst us yet recall with pride some of the incidents of these red-letter days in their scholastic career. It was an eventful day with some. The exhibition of intellectual strength finished, the young Goliaths would repair to the village green to give proof of their physical prowess, and if the pupils of a neighbouring educational establishment could be met with on their march a pitched battle ensued, which if it left no serious consequences behind, at least supplied the place of the manual and physical exercises of the present day instruction.

But we have changed all that. The Government Inspector pays his annual visit, like the spring

flowers, only to return again next year, and leaving the teacher to perform "the daily round, the common task," under the supervision of the Parish School Board. And it may not be long ere their functions will be transferred to the recently-formed Parish Councils. The old order changeth. School Boards will have their day and cease to be, and on the whole when the history of the School Board system, comes to be written, it will be said of them that they did their work well, although here and there over the land, individual members, especially in the early days of the system, succeeded only in exposing their own ignorance of educational methods and administration.

Amongst the other changes in our educational system, free education has also come. There was not, as some have maintained, universal free education in the olden time, although the Kirk through her Presbyteries and Kirk-Sessions made provision for the education of poor children. Teachers were obliged by the Act of 1803 "to teach such poor children of the parish as shall be recommended by the heritors and ministers at any parochial meeting." Thus, so far as she was able, did the Kirk long ago make education compulsory, and free to the poor.

In education, as in many other departments of life and work, the present is a transition period. Many educational changes are in the air. The organisation of the various branches of education requires to be completed and co-ordinated. To do this successfully, and work out on historical lines the fullest development of our splendid system of education, something more is required than the application of the mechanical tests and appliances of the present day. Problems affecting both teacher and taught will require to be solved, and these may best be viewed with the historical eye. Artists, it is said, learn much from a study of the old masters, and the architects of our educational fabric may also glean from the methods and practice of these old school guardians many a useful and suggestive lesson. We doubt not but that this is being done at the present day. It only remains for all in their several departments to imitate, in so far as present day circumstances will permit, the enthusiasm and the wise foresight which marked the actions of the reforming fathers of our educa-

tional system, and having done this we may safely leave its keeping to future generations assured that they, as we, will appreciate their patriotic labours, and "rise up and call them blessed."

## CHAPTER XII.

REMINISCENCES OF PERSONS—CHARLES STIVEN—  
SNUFF BOXES—JOHN DAVIDSON—FAMOUS SHOP  
BILL—JAMES BREMNER, ARTIST.

X The present age is not conducive to the production of "characters." The restless spirit of the age, the rapid means of communication, and the spread of education are all tending to wipe out from society those individuals who were found more or less in every parish and town, and whose eccentricities of character or oddities of manner singled them out from their fellows as being in one way or other remarkable. They were interesting objects of study to the observer of human nature, and gave a variety to the outward aspects of life. But this type of humanity is passing away, and in the future will become more rare, and may henceforth be known only in the pages of the novelist or historian.

Glenbervie, in common with other parishes had its worthies, and in the hope that a glimpse into their ways and character may prove of interest we here subjoin a few notes on some of them.

### CHARLES STIVEN

✓ was born in the parish of Glenbervie in 1753. His father was a devoted adherent of the hapless Jacobites, and Charles himself was named after the young Pretender, "Bonnie Prince Charlie." The whole family, indeed, seem to have been staunch Episcopalians and Jacobites. Jean Stiven, in whose house in Stonehaven meetings were held after the destruction of the Episcopal Chapel by the bloody Cumberland was probably an aunt of Charles Stiven. It was at this time that the Episcopal ministers of Stonehaven, Drumlithie, and other places were put on trial for holding worship in any place at which more than five persons did assemble. For this it is well known they were confined in the Tolbooth of Stonehaven for six months during the winter of 1748-49.

It was not, however, in connection with Episcopacy that Charles Stiven became famous. He was the maker of the famous Laurencekirk snuff-boxes

and that delight of childhood the "totum." In those days both males and females indulged in the luxury of snuff-taking, and Charles ministered to the wants of the Glenbervie folk in the matter of snuff boxes, for a good number of years. But his fame as a snuff-box-maker spread. The famous Lord Gardenstone of Laurencekirk heard of him, and being an ardent votary of the snuff box, Charles was induced by him to go to Laurencekirk about the year 1783 and thus give to Laurencekirk the reputation over the whole world for excellent snuff boxes. The peculiarity of the boxes lay in the concealed spring and the wooden pin, and Charles henceforth devoted his talents to the perfection of these. Indeed, such a thriving trade was carried on that three establishments were set up for the manufacture of snuff boxes, but the Stivens, father and son, not only survived the other two but also added other industries to their establishment, when the demand for snuff boxes became not so great, owing to a change of opinion as to the desirability of snuff taking. In the old stage-coach days the Stivens held the booking office, and care was taken to duly display articles of their workmanship of all shapes and sizes to tempt the passengers.

In due time the firm was honoured with the appointment of boxmakers to Her Majesty; and on more than one occasion was "commanded" to appear at Balmoral with specimens of their handicraft for inspection by Her Majesty.

But whilst the wants of the adult population were duly attended to, he also gained a reputation as being the best maker of "totums" for children to amuse themselves with at the New Year festivities. These he supplied for the small sum of one half-penny, and no doubt many a Glenbervie and Laurencekirk laddie and lassie had left Charlie Stiven's shop in glee, fumbling his "totum" in his pocket all the way home, and eager to test the recommendation it had no doubt got as it came fresh from the hand of the wonderful Stiven!

Whether in the multitude of toys and juvenile attractions of these latter days the old fashioned "totum" may or may not have been relegated to an obscure place in the affections of childhood, the following excellent remarks on it from Fraser's "History of Laurencekirk" will no doubt be read by young and old with great interest.—"In these modern times, it may be necessary to explain that



this little gambling instrument was in the form of a cube, with a stalk or axis on which it was made to spin. On the four sides were painted in Roman capitals the letters A, D, N and T, respectively, and the luck of the gambler depended on which of those sides was uppermost when the rotatory motion had ceased. Let it not be despised, either for its simple construction, or for the fact that a 'Yule preen or nut' was the humble stake at every game. The origin of the totum was classical. A Roman emperor—it matters not which—satiated with the amusements of the age, commanded the wisest of his counsellors to find out some game whose freshness and general excellence would recommend it to his imperial master, and relieve him of his ennui. He invented the "totum," and was rewarded with all but imperial honours. Hence the characters inscribed on the little cube, which were probably a mystery to all but one in a thousand of the Messrs Stevens juvenile patrons. A in the eyes of the Roman Emperor stood for "Accipe unum" which, however, unconsciously, was most accurately translated in the vernacular, "A, take ane"—when D appeared, "Donato alium" was the disappointed remark in the days of old Rome, supplanted in Laurencekirk (and Glenbervie) by the still more expressive "D. duntle doon ane." N was a negative quantity, calling for a contemptuous "Nihil" from the imperial lips, to be repeated with double energy by the tongues of his modern representatives, "N., nickle naething." The coveted of all the letters was T.; success could no further go, whether the stake were an emperor's crown or a "Yule preen." "T. tak' a!" was the exultant exclamation of the Scottish youth, which corresponded exactly in meaning with the Roman, "T. totum."

#### JOHN DAVIDSON.

Another "character" famous in his day was John Davidson. John kept a shop in a small house close to the road from Drumlithie to Glenbervie House, at a place called Newbigging. In by-gone days advertising as now practised was scarcely known, but John must have had the spirit of advertising strongly developed in him, else he could never have hit upon the method he adopted to advertise his wares. He seems to have had the faculty, also, of jingling "rhymes," if at times the

"reason" was absent, for he concocted an advertising bill, which is a curiosity in its way. We are enabled to give it here through the kindness of the Rev. Mr Gordon, of Glenbervie, who has a copy of it. The quaintness it displays, and the ingenuity of construction it shows will be the apology for quoting it entire. Indeed it is so "fearfully and wonderfully made" that some modern "universal providers" have made application for it for advertising purposes, but it is to be hoped that old John's memory will be respected so far as to prevent modern journalism laying hold of the bill. John's son went to Aberdeen and learned the baking trade, in which he seems to have succeeded very well; while his grandson settled in business in London, where he made his fortune. The latter was educated in Drumlithie School, and used to pay frequent visits to his father's native parish, as well as to the parish of Benholm, where some of his relatives resided. In 1891 he presented to Johnshaven a lifeboat named the "Glenbervie," and at the launching ceremony Mr James Badenach Nicolson of Glenbervie made an interesting speech in which he referred to Mr Davidson's connection with Glenbervie.

The following is the advertising bill, the right of reproducing which is reserved :—

My customers, both great and small  
 I thank you kindly one and all;  
 Your favors shown to me before  
 I still esteem, and beg for more;  
 I will you serve, both air and late,  
 With new brought goods, genteel and neat;  
 And if you'd know what things I've got  
 Look down below and read by rote.  
 Here's Riga, Dutch, and Memel flax,  
 With good long tow, and sacking backs;  
 Powder-sugar, coarse and fine,  
 Tar and iron, ropes and twine,  
 Iron hoops, baith auld and new,  
 Pearl ashes, starch, and blue;  
 Birse, rosin, and canary seeds,  
 Rattlers, rings, and children's beads.  
 Stock indigo, brimstone, and spice,  
 Barley, currants, figs and rice;  
 Good wool, cards, and story books,  
 English hops and corn hooks;  
 Metal pots and good brass pans,  
 Butter jars and honey cans.  
 Raisins, needles, nails, and tacks,  
 Garden spades and virgin wax;

Sugar candy, hemp, and glue,  
 Wheeling wire, and fingering too ;  
 Buckram, buttons, thread, and hair,  
 Good mouse traps and earthen ware ;  
 Garden seeds, and leather laces,  
 Spectacles, and also cases ;  
 Good vinegar, and pocket books,  
 Salt herrings, and the best trout hooks ;  
 Gunpowder, too, and good sheet lead,  
 Button moulds, and clover seed ;  
 Train oil to burn till it be late,  
 Durham mustard, and dry skate ;  
 Salt butter, cheese, and Florence oil,  
 Will keep twelve months before they spoil ;  
 Chopin bottles, phial glasses,  
 Things fit for wives as well as lasses ;  
 I've Indian herbs, both black and green,  
 As good 's you'll get in Aberdeen ;  
 There's fine snuff boxes no doubt,  
 With iv'ry mulls turned staff about ;  
 Cards and trappings, tapes and stringings,  
 In winter I sell Handie's ingans,  
 Tobacco, fit to chew or puff,  
 And I always sell John Coghnie's snuff.  
 Gimblets here, wi' boxen heads,  
 Gingerbread, and anise seeds ;  
 Alum, gum-stones, and writing paper,  
 And here's sweet sack, none sells it cheaper ;  
 Ind and wafers, both red and black,  
 With playing cards, sold by the pack ;  
 I've Rowley's snuff of British herbs,  
 Good common Bibles and Proverbs ;  
 New Testaments, prayer books, and pens ;  
 Women's thimbles here, and Men's ;  
 Weavers brushes and whale fins,  
 English cloth and well dress'd skins ;  
 Tobacco pipes, bone combs and horn,  
 And shears wherewith the sheep are shorn  
 I sell dram glasses, of sev'ral sorts,  
 With well dressed flax, and also shorts.  
 Salt bottles here, for those who smells,  
 Hartshorn drops, and nipple shells ;  
 All kinds of bread, both neat and clean,  
 (I learn'd to bako in Aberdeen ; )  
 At marriage, feast, or funeral,  
 I'll do my best to please you all ;  
 I keep my oven always warm  
 And bake their meal who brings me barn,  
 White iron work may here be seen,  
 Just finished off in Aberdeen ;  
 All sorts off skillet pans and kettles,  
 And money down for your old metals ;  
 Newcastle ware, too, plates and jugs,  
 With sev'ral sorts of doctors drugs ;

Wade's famous balsam, fennel seed,  
 Spermaciti, and white lead ;  
 Bole of borax, Spanish flies  
 Oil of roses, and anise,  
 Bitter aloes, and rose water,  
 Oxecroton, fit for batter ;  
 Saffron, mace, and staughton too,  
 Vitroil, both white and blue ;  
 Physic, and vomiters by dozes,  
 Camphor, and conserves of roses,  
 British oil, cried up by some.  
 Fino nutmegs and shining gum,  
 Bostock's cordial, genuine,  
 And Godfrey's, too, if you incline ;  
 I've Bateman's drops and salves for cuts,  
 With powders for all griped guts ;  
 Spearment water, hyssop fine,  
 Penny royal and spirits of wine ;  
 Syrups here and things that's rare,  
 Bones of violet and maiden hair,  
 Oils of linseed here and spect,  
 And twenty things I must neglect,  
 Ointments too, both white and yellow  
 With holy-tincture, and marsh mallow.  
 Hungary waters in a glass,  
 Eye salve, pomatum, more or less ;  
 Nit-salve I sell to cure the itch ;  
 Quicksilver and Burgundy pitch.  
 I keep fine drops, it's not a jest,  
 Will cure the toochache, or on-beast ;  
 Worm cakes I sell, and fine rose-honey,  
 And all my drugs for ready money ;  
 And lassies all, if 'tis you will,  
 I've factory lint from Gordon's mill.  
 I hope you'll all come flockin' here,  
 My price is good, you needna' fear ;  
 Liquorice root and verdrigrise,  
 Brazil, and madder, if you please ;  
 Empty casks and mats of segs,  
 Combed wool and jocktales ;  
 Black-sugar, pins, and bottle corks,  
 Women's muffles, knives and forks ;  
 Tow, cards, and more things may be seen,  
 With junipers, both black and green ;  
 Ginger, silk, and good white thread,  
 Pray then come here for what you need ;  
 No man shall serve you with less priggling,  
 And my name is

JOHN DAVIDSON, at Newbigging.

JAMES BREMNER

though not a native of Glenbervie yet began his  
 artistic career, and developed his powers in our  
 little parish that it seems but graceful and fitting

that some notice should be taken of one who, under many difficulties gave promise of a future which unfortunately was early cut short. An invalid from infancy, Bremner early showed a great liking for drawing and colouring. In this he was judiciously guided by an intelligent mother, and in a short time his little sketches attracted the attention of a few friends in the district, including Mrs Nicolson of Glenbervie, and Mr Stuart of Inehbreek by whom he was encouraged to pursue his studies.

Beginning with the simplest flower studies, he thereafter attempted and very successfully, landscape and rustic pieces. The thatched house by the wayside, the mossy bank and wimpling brook had a great fascination for him, and in these he was generally successful. "His drawing," says an artistic friend, "was almost invariably accurate, and his touch delicate. His treatment is essentially fastidious."

In portraiture he did good work both with brush and pencil. Commissions readily came to him, but Bremner had almost a morbid distrust of his own power. He was prone to torment himself by trying to distinguish between patronage due to his circumstances, and recognition due to appreciation of his art. Through the kindness of local friends he was sent up to the Royal Institution, Edinburgh, where he studied under the best masters and improved his knowledge of art, besides having access to the works of the great masters. Bremner's reputation was bound therefore to spread beyond the confines of his own little world. He exhibited in Dundee and Aberdeen, and was represented in the Montrose Fine Art Exhibition of 1890. His work was also known at local bazaars and attracted always a considerable amount of attention from connoisseurs.

Besides his powers as an artist Bremner also possessed a mind well stored by extensive reading, and could converse intelligently on art and art subjects, the discrimination and judgment which he displayed being for one in his position remarkable. "Of Mr James Bremner, artist, Drumlithie," says the art critic of the *Montrose Standard*, "it may be said in conventional phrase, with perfect truth, that he lived and died in obscurity. Reflection upon the interest which centred in him and his career shows, however, how wide the bounds of an obscure life may in reality be. The interest manifested in him was by no means wholly due

either to his position among artists or to his contributions to art. It attached to him primarily as an individual, and was heightened by the fact of his being an artist. He presented an attractive personality. The paralysis of his lower limbs, and generally delicate health, served to bring into relief the moral strength which inspired him to strive to overcome infirmity. To one fresh from the ceaseless battle of the outside world—the war of giants and pigmies, heroes and cowards—peace seems the ruling spirit of the village where Bremner lived. It seemed almost necessary that peace should lap the cottage by the roadside and be the controlling element in the lives of its inmates. The greater the pity once more to feel that perfect peace rarely abides with genius! Amiable, intelligent, and possessed of much true culture—a rare possession, conducive to modesty and self-repression—Bremner was precisely the man to attract the attention which fans without feeding the fires of ambition. He felt the restlessness of genius. He could know no repose until he had found expression for the heart-feeling which looked out of his eyes and made his sensitive fingers quiver. His struggle was not like that of the world, ‘where to live is to brawl and to battle,’ but it was no less incessant. It went on daily in the recesses of his heart. To me he is a living and fragrant memory, pure, and inspiring; a memory of patient courage untinged with grief. He had delivered part of the message with which he was entrusted. His fate is less sad than their’s ‘who die with all their music in them.’ As a matter of fact his art had hardly passed from bud to blossom. It is not to be judged absolutely. It was full of promise. It was tender rather than virile, delicate rather than strong, and at its full development would probably have inclined more to penetration than breadth more to subtlety than either brilliancy or force. He was no mere mechanic in art. His mind was radically poetic, and the idyllic quality is present in all his landscapes. Into what unknown region of art he might have passed none can tell. Perhaps he might have taken rank with other great artists of the north-east of Scotland—Colvin Smith, George Paul Chambers, James Irvine, and Sir George Reid. He needed time to develop, and mayhap development goes on elsewhere.”



## CHAPTER XIII.

ANTIQUITIES—ST CONAN'S WELL—STONE COFFINS—  
BRONZE SWORDS—CASTLE OF FIDDES—THE  
LEGEND OF THRUMMY CAP.

## ANTIQUITIES.

Most of us have heard of the man who wrote a book containing a chapter, headed, "Snakes in Iceland," in which the first sentence was "There are no snakes in Iceland." So might we begin our chapter on the antiquities of the parish, and say "There are no antiquities in Glenbervie." Thus, it is stated in the first statistical account, but exception might be taken to that statement now, because since it was written one or two relics of the past have been unearthed, and on these we intend to give a few notes. There are, of course, also the monuments in the Douglas vault in the churchyard, but these have been already noticed.

Neighbouring parishes, such as Fordoun, Dunnottar, and Fetteresso, are rich in antiquities and legendary lore, but Glenbervie in this respect is singularly destitute. Old people there are in the parish who will give you a traditionary tale connected with one or two local spots, but they are at best merely "pious opinions" which they will not willingly let die, but which they are utterly unable to substantiate by actual facts.

In common with many other places, Glenbervie has its

## "WISHING WELL,"

to which a pilgrimage is made on the first Sunday of May in each year, by the young men and maidens in the district. The inevitable three pins are duly thrown over the shoulders of the devoted pilgrims, whilst the silent wish is revolved in the mind, but we have never heard whether or not the wishes there propounded have been attended by a happy realisation. The well is dedicated to St Conan, and is situated in the thick plantation which runs along the north slope of "Drumlithie Den."

From time to time specimens illustrative of the

## BRONZE AND STONE PERIODS

have been found, whorl-stones, stone axes and hammers, as well as stone cists being amongst the "finds." Whilst the Caledonian Railway was in course of construction a considerable number of stone coffins were unearthed in a mound on a field

on Broombank farm. The field lies on the south side of the railway; between it and the '*pays de france*' road which leads to the old tollhouse at Mondynes. The spot where they were found is no distance away from the Court Stone on the farm of Mondynes and is in an almost direct line to the east of it.

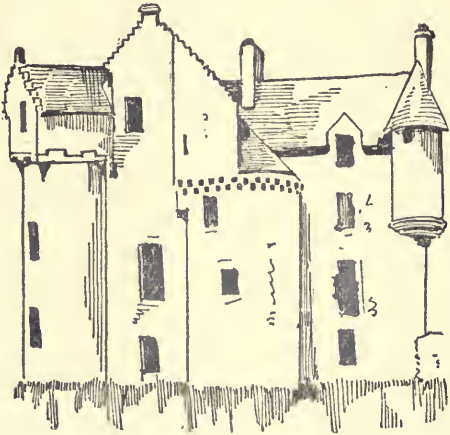
In February 1878, on a declivity on the farm of Cleugh-head, in the upper part of the parish, a cist containing calcined bones was found, and a perforated stone hammer which was sent to the National Museum of Antiquities, Edinburgh.

Specimens of the bronze period in the shape of two swords were found on 30th April, 1880, in the lower part of the farm of Jacksbank, in the estate of Lawgavin in the parish. A drain was being cut by Mr Robert Smith, Burnhead, and the swords (leaf-shaped in form) were found close together lying across the bottom of the drain, which ran from north to south. They were lying between the vegetable or mossy matter and a bed of sand, and were about three feet from the surface. In the course of removal the sword which was first seen was broken into three pieces, but an examination of the fractured surface showed that till then it was entire. The second sword was removed with care, and had a smooth even surface. The whole length was almost 26 inches, including the handle plate which measured about 4 inches; the breadth of the leaf was  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches. There was no appearance of wood, bone, or horn attached to the handle, but the pins there were standing out on either side, but broke off at once when touched. The blade was considerably bent on removal, and was found to be considerably oxidised. The sword weighed a little over 20 ozs. The entire sword and the two pieces were presented to the Edinburgh Museum also by Mr John Burnet, farmer, Jacksbank.

"It is worthy of note" says the Rev. James Gammaek, to whom we are obliged for these notes on the discovery, "as at least suggestive of thought, though without attempting to define the coincidence or the sequence of the stone and bronze ages in Scotland, that the spot where the swords were found is within half-a-mile of the place where the Cleughhead cist and hammer were found." On the same estate (Lawgavin) there is a stretch of ground which goes

by the name of Muir of Germany, and tradition has it that a battle was fought there. But no one has been able either to trace the origin of the above name or to tell when the battle is said to have been fought.

Though not actually in the parish, but a very short distance beyond it. The



CASTLE OF FIDDES

may be mentioned here as one of the most striking of the ancient buildings in the district. It must be of very ancient date. The walls are seemingly in no way impaired by the ravages of time, although the moss has gathered thick on the grey-slatted roof. It is said to have been built for a dower-house, and the situation chosen for it commands a wide view of the country to both east and west. Its look would suggest to one now-a-days rather the character of a stronghold or keep, which in the olden days would have served as a watch tower. To-day the lower part of the castle has been converted into a shed for the stock on the farm of the same name.

It is in the legend connected with it that its chief interest to us lies. As is well known, it was the scene of the adventures of

“THRUMMY CAP.”

This legend has long enjoyed a great popularity in the North of Scotland. It was written by John Burness, consin-german to Robert Burns, the poet, he being a son of the last William Burness, who tenanted Bogjorgan.

Well known as the legend is we make no apology for here giving a short outline of it.

The story takes its title from one of two men who “forgather’d o’ the way” about “a hunder miles ayont the Forth,” on a stormy winter day.

“Ane was a sturdy bardoch chiel,  
An’ frao the weather happit weel,  
Wi’ a mill’d plaiding jockey coat,  
An’ eke he on his heid had got  
A Thrummy cap, baith large and stont,  
Wi’ flaps ahint, as weel’s a snout  
Whilk buttoned close aneath his chin  
Tae keep the cauld frae gettin’ in.”

The second one was the reverse of Thrummy in his dress—

“For duds upo’ him they were scarce,  
An unca frichtit glowin’ body,  
Ye’d taen him for a rin-the-wuddy.”

In this condition they were overtaken by a storm of snow-drift, and agreed to seek shelter at the first house they came to.

“Syne they a mansion-house did spy  
Upo’ the road a piece afore.

On going up to the door they received a salutation from a “meikle dog” which caused Thrummy “to handle well his aiken staff.”

The landlord soon appeared on the scene and began to “speir the casep.”

“Quo Thrummy, “Sir, we hae gaen rill,  
We thocht we’d neer a house get till ;  
We near were smo’red amo’ the drift,  
And sae gudeman ye’ll mak’ a shift,  
To gie us quarter’s a’ this nicht  
For woo we dinna hae the licht  
Farer to gang, tho’ it were fair,  
Sae gin ye ha’e a bed to spare,  
What’eer you chairge, we canna grudge,  
But satisfy ye, ere we budge,  
Sae gang awa’—an’ fan ’tis day  
We’ll pack oor a’ an’ tak the way.”

The landlord, however, informed them that there was not a bed to be got, as he had scarcely sufficient for his “ain fowks.”

“But” was his alternative to them  
 “gin ye’ll gan but twa miles forrit,  
 Aside the Kirk dwalls Robbie Dorrit,  
 Wha keeps a change-house, sells gude drink;  
 His hoose ye may mak’ oot I think.”

The Kirk here mentioned is the Kirk of Glenbervie, and Robbie’s “change-house” stood on the left hand side of the road leading from Drumlithie to the Kirk. The house, like many another one, has disappeared.

After a good deal of parleying in which the landlord expressed his reluctance to let the two travellers stay overnight, and Thrummy his “positiveness” to stay, the former at last agreed to take them in, at the same time telling them that there was only one room unoccupied, and “haunted by a fearfu’ ghaist.” But Thrummy knew no fears, and tried to screw up the courage of the other.

“Fling by your fears, and come be cheery,  
 Landlord, gin ye’ll make up that bed,  
 I promise I’ll be verra gled  
 Within the same a’ nicht to lie  
 If that the room be warm and dry.”

The landlord saw to their comforts and gave them a parting salutation and

“bade them gang  
 To bed whenever they did think lang.”

Sleep deserted the pillow of poor John, but Thrummy slept soundly until midnight,  
 “Preserve’s,” quo’ he, “I’m like to choke  
 Wi’ thirst, and I maun hae a drink,  
 I will gang doon the stair, I think,  
 And grapple for the water pail.  
 O’ for a waucht o’ caller ale!”

So down he goes, promising to bring to the terrified John “a little drap.”

But, reader, judge o’ his surprise.  
 When there he saw, wi’ winderin’ eyes,  
 A spacious vault weel stored wi’ casks,  
 O’ reamin’ ale, and some big flasks  
 An’ stride legs ower a eask o’ ale,  
 He saw the likeness o’ himsel’  
 Just in the dress that he cuist aff  
 A Thrummy cap and aiken staff,  
 Gammashes, and the joekey coat,  
 An’ in its hand the ghaist had got  
 A big four-leggit timmer bicker,  
 Filled to the brim wi’ nappy liquour.

Repeated draughts of the beer were quaffed; and this had the effect of “composing themsel to rest.”

An oor in bed they hadna been,  
 And scarcely well had closed their een,  
 When just into the neighbourin' chammin'er  
 They heard a dreadfu' din and clamour.

Thrummy ever forward goes to see what was  
 wrong, and saw apparitions twa.

The speerits seemed to kick a ba'  
 The ghaist against the ither twa,  
 Whilk close they drave baith back and fore  
 Atween the chimney and the door.

Two against one did not commend itself to  
 Thrummy's sense of fair play, and so he joined in  
 the sport.

When the play was finished Thrummy is inter-  
 cepted on going to bed by the ghost, and for his  
 bold behaviour was to be troubled no more, on con-  
 dition of doing a certain thing. This was to take  
 out a stone in the wall, when a leather ball would  
 be found containing the rights of the estate sewed  
 up within it. Thrummy was to hand these over to  
 the laird on receipt of fifty guineas, the Laird on  
 his part being thus freed from a complicated law suit  
 he was then engaged in regarding the rights of his  
 estate. In the morning the Laird hinted to them  
 to go, but Thrummy replied,

"Sir, mind what I tell,  
 I've mair richt here than you yersel'  
 Sae till I like I here shall bide."

The laird at this began to chide :  
 Says he, "my friend, ye're turnin' rude,"  
 Quo Thrummy "I'll my claim mak guid,  
 For here, I just before ye a',  
 The richts o' this estate can show.  
 And that is mair than ye can do."

The parchments were duly produced, and  
 Thrummy told him all his tale.

"The laird at this was fidgin' fain,  
 That he had got his richts again ;  
 And fifty guineas doun did tell,  
 Besides a present frae himsel'."

Thrummy departed with his treasure his neighbour  
 receiving none of the spoil, for  
 While I at the footba' played  
 The coward lay trimlin' in his bed.



## CHAPTER XIV.

RESURRECTIONISTS—JOHN CLARK AND THE SESSION—  
 “CARRYING THE BODY”—THE REMOVAL OF  
 “BODIES.”

Very few in the present day can realise the alarm and strong feelings of disgust created by the actions of those who, almost two generations ago, went by the significant name of “resurrectionists.” In those days young men in training for the medical profession were required to provide a “subject” on which to operate in order to learn the practical part of their work. “Bodies” were not, however, to hand when required, and consequently recourse was had to the revolting practice of despoiling the graves of those who were newly buried. Hence the term “Resurrectionists” was applied to them.

The disgusting practice spread great alarm all over the country, and the quiet parish of Glenbervie shared this fear in common with others. Indeed, the more remote and deserted the spot was, the greater likelihood there was of its being an attractive spot for the sacrilegious work of the despoiler of graves. When the angel of death has passed over a household, our natural feelings would prompt us to say a sympathetic word, or do a kindly action, but in those days, to the sorrow and grief felt at such a time, was added the dread that the loved father or mother, or brother or sister might be removed from “the long home.” Hence precautions were taken to guard against the malicious work of the “Resurrectionist.”

In many cases heavy iron gratings or logs of wood were fixed over the graves, only to be removed at the lapse of a month or two, when all danger of the removal of the body was past. Straw, thatch, and heather were also used. When the body had been “laired,” the process of filling in the grave was begun by a layer of earth, after which came a layer of thatch or heather, and so on alternately. The heather or thatch proved an effective barrier to the spade of the “Resurrectionist.” Besides, the friends or relations of the deceased would often through “the silent watches of the night” place themselves on guard at the grave side.

Considerable feeling was aroused in Glenbervie over the matter. A grave had been opened and a

body snatched. Speculation was rife. This, that, and the other story had gone abroad, and was noised over the parish. Public opinion had sifted the matter thoroughly, and suspicion was at last fixed on the worthy beadle and grave-digger, John Clark. These offices had been long in the hands of members of the Clark family, and now here it was publicly reported that John had thrown away the traditions of the family for upright and honourable conduct! What made the matter look worse was the fact that John was a servant of the kirk, and as such, should have been the staunch opponent of any one who, with sacrilegious purpose, sought to enter the sacred spot where the "rude forefathers of the hamlet" slept.

But doubt there seemed to be none that John was the culprit, and so great a feeling was raised in the kirk and parish over it that the elders of the church resigned in a body! But elders' conclusions may just be wrong sometimes as well as other people's. Things are not always, as the poet says, what they seem. And in this particular case they certainly had jumped to an erroneous conclusion. Moreover, no direct evidence was forthcoming against John. However, they forthwith demanded the resignation of the man who they were certain had done the deed, and thus shocked the moral sense of the parish.

The worthy Mr Drummond, then parish minister, would have none of this, however. He firmly believed in John's innocence. And more than this, he had, from actual observation, a fact which would tell in John's favour—one of those circumstantial details which can often be turned to good account in one's cause.

John was in the invariable habit of throwing the earth to the *same* side in opening a grave, whereas the one then despoiled had the earth all on the *opposite* side from what was John's invariable custom. Mr Drummond had probably pleaded John's cause before the elders, and directed against them some of those keen shafts of satire and sarcasm which he could, when occasion required, use with good effect. John accordingly was not removed, but continued his melancholy task till he too was "gathered to his fathers."

In connection with the above "resurrection" episode, a story is told of the Rev. Mr Drummond and the then laird of Glenbervie. In common with the rest of the parish the laird was very much

shocked at the alleged scandal on the part of the kirk-officer. Mr Drummond had a fund of dry humour in which he delighted. The laird happened to meet the minister one day on the road leading to the graveyard, when the conversation naturally turned on the recent acts of desecration. "And" said the laird "I believe your man is blamed for lifting the body, I hope that is not true." Oh, yes, said Mr Drummond he did lift a body, I saw him come down the manse road with it in a big basket." A look of indignation crept over the laird's features, but it wore off and was replaced by a grim smile, when the minister, with a merry twinkle in his eye, added, "But it was only the body of a hare for the minister's pot."

Another example of the pawky humour so characteristic of Scotchmen is exhibited in the following anecdote, connected with the same case. A person whom we shall call Mr X, and who was also strongly suspected of having known the ultimate destination of the "lifted" body, if not of having been art and part in the work, was sitting one day in the hotel (then directly opposite to the present one, in what is now Mr Wyllie's shop), talking to a friend who had engaged himself to a neighbouring farmer. Mr X. seems to have been of a sarcastic or bantering turn, and thought to deter the farm servant from his work. "Man," said he, "fowk will tak' you for a bogle, and ghosts will haunt you by nicht." "Oh," said he in reply, with a sly hit at the suspicion resting on his friend, "I care little wha come to me, or what they think o' me when living if they would only let me alane when deed." The shaft had not missed its mark. Mr X. excused himself and made a hasty departure.

When the body was actually lifted, it required considerable ingenuity and caution to get it conveyed to its destination, which usually in this part of the country was the University city of Aberdeen. Numerous expedients were consequently resorted to. And there was the danger that the despoilers might be discovered in the act. The following story, though not actually connected with Glenbervie, but with a parish not far away, will illustrate this. Two body snatchers had contrived to get a "body" removed from its resting place, and (*horresco referens*) had endeavoured to set it up on a seat in their vehicle, duly attired, and supported by them one

on each side. Thus they set out for Aberdeen but while near it stopped for refreshment at a wayside inn. Without leaving their seat they called for their "stirrup cup," which was duly forthcoming for the two. The good wife of the inn was naturally surprised that they did not extend their hospitality to the third one, and enquired why they did not do so. "Oh," said the neatest one in a light hearted, if only too true remark "this one does not drink." They departed in the dark, but the good wife's suspicions were aroused, and on communicating her story to others, it was strongly surmised that they had a "body" between them, and a hot pursuit was resolved on. They were followed into the city, but the villains, fearing the consequences of their abominable action, had consigned the corpse to a watery grave, by throwing it over the Bridge of Dec. However, they were "marked" men, and one of them at least found it so uncomfortable that he was forced to quit the country.

Three score years have come and gone since these things happened, and we are tempted to marvel how such things were possible. They could not happen now; but we must rejoice that they are not needed now. The pursuit of medical knowledge is now carried on in a manner more complete and methodical than in those exciting times, and in no way is the public conscience, more elevated than then, in the least degree shocked or annoyed. For this, and many other beneficent changes during the last two generations, we ought to be deeply thankful.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### GLENBERVIEANA.

Next to his well-known love for a theological discourse or argument there is, perhaps, nothing the average Scotchman likes better than a good story or joke—especially when the point of the joke is directed against some other than himself. Quite able to meet his opponents in argument he yet knows that there is, at times, something more telling than abstract reasoning. Where the latter would fail, a bit of dry humour or keen shaft of satire will often avail. There is not a parish in Scotland where a joke is not now and again "perpetrated," a humorous story told, or a grotesque incident related in illustration of this. In the olden days

when there was less communication between places than there is now, and less intercourse with the outside world, such stories were rife. Peculiarities of character, incidents of rural and village life, and a thousand other things formed the theme for a sly humorous remark or a shaft of keen satirical irony. In the present artificial age there is less chance of such characteristic humour being found amongst us. Character may or may not be better formed under the levelling and equalising influence of the Board School and our incessant intercourse with each other far and near over the country, but "characters"—those interesting subjects of study to the observant student of human nature—will henceforth be more rarely found.

Glenbervie in the past had its "characters" and its fund of stories which passed from mouth to mouth over the parish. There are many good ones still current amongst the parishioners, and we propose here to give a few by way of sample. The most of them are related of the Rev. Dr Drummond. Several of those that follow have already appeared in print, but being good they will bear repetition. Characteristic of Scotsmen they have nearly all reference to kirk or kirk affairs. In the olden days it was sometimes very difficult in a parish such as Glenbervie to procure a person competent to lead the praise in the church. The diffusion of musical education through the medium of the parish school was a thing undreamt of. Hence too often the parishioners had no more musical ability or taste than what Nature had originally endowed them with. The church, too, was devoid of any artificial aid to the psalmody such as is so common now-a-days, and so, in many instances, this part of the service was woefully dreary and forbidding. But even when a "leader" was got he did not always meet with the unanimous approbation of the congregation. There are to be found in every corner of the land and in every branch of society the inevitable few who think everything wrong that is not shaped on their own auvil. In many cases the "malcontents" resorted to the undignified and senseless method of showing their disapprobation by

#### HOWLING DOWN THE PRECENTOR.

On a certain Sunday in Mr Drummond's time, it seems that an organised attempt had been made on the part of a few to carry out this method of en-

forcing their disapprobation either of the precentor or the managers of the kirk. They were so far successful in this that he fairly collapsed. But Mr Drummond was not a man to be trifled with. At the moment of collapse he got up, and with a look of righteous indignation in his eye looked the insulters of the church service fairly in the face, and said in stern and solemn tones "Let us *attempt* to praise God again by singing in the 45th Paraphrase, 1st verse." Thereupon he launched forth at their heads the words of solemn reproof—

"Ungrateful sinners ! whence this scorn  
Of God's long suffering grace ?  
And whence this madness that insults  
The Almighty to his face ?"

The rebuke had the desired effect. A blush of shame erept over the faces of the cowardly delinquents, and no further attempts were made to annoy the precentor.

#### A NOVEL PULPIT DISCOURSE.

Mr Drummond belonged to the old school of divines, and in the exercise of his ministerial functions did not care for any outside interference. All sham and cant were distasteful to him, and anything savouring in the least degree of dishonourable conduct came under his stern rebuke. On one occasion when about to ordain a new batch of elders he received a letter from one of his congregation—a self-important farmer in the upper part of the parish—in which he set forth in great detail the defects or weaknesses in the character of one of those nominated for the sacred office. Mr Drummond took a very characteristic method of reply to the epistle. On the Sunday previous to that fixed for the ordination of the proposed elders, and at the close of the service he asked the congregation to stay for a minute or two as he had a remarkable epistle to read to them. Unfolding it, in solemn tones he read it over from beginning to end. In the course of the reading the author, who was seated in the gallery, was gradually sliding down from his seat, until the final words came—"yours truly (signed)"—when he fairly disappeared below the book board. The hope may have flickered in the author's breast to the last that his name would not be mentioned, but Mr Drummond, no doubt, judged rightly that this unique method of replying to his misguided literary zeal would have the effect in the



future of checking the ardour of those who might be too ready to cast aspersions on the personal character of their neighbours.

#### A BURNING AND A SHINING LIGHT.

Whilst on one of his pastoral visitations Mr Drummond met one of his congregation who he recollected had been absent from church for a few successive Sundays. After the usual salutations had been exchanged between them, the minister ventured to hint that he had missed him from church, and enquired whether he was in his usual good health. In a semi-apologetic strain the good man replied that he had been to Fordoun Church to hear "Maister Buchan," who at the time had a great reputation in the district as a preacher. "Ay, and what thought ye o' him," said the minister. "O mighty brieht, sir, mighty brieht." This description fairly tickled the fancy of the minister who bade him "good day" and departed with a faint smile beaming over his features. *Apropos* of Mr Buchan we may here give an anecdote connected with Fordoun similar to the one above quoted. Like Mr Drummond, the minister of Fordoun had been enquiring of one of his flock—a shepherd—what had come over him that he was so seldom at church. The shepherd who lived in the upper end of the parish replied that he found it more convenient for him to attend at Fetterearn, and that he had been going there. This did not commend itself as a fully satisfactory reply to the reverend gentleman, who by a sort of mild argument said to the shepherd, "But you, a shepherd, I am sure, do not like your sheep to wander away and poach on other people's preserves. You would like them to stay on your own side of the hill." "Weel sir" replied the shepherd, with a sly look, "I widna care very muckle whare they gaed, gin the girse were ony better." This significant hint was no doubt, not lost on Mr Buchan, but whether the shepherd came back to the Fordoun fold, or not, history does not say.

#### "DEEVILISH STRONG."

In the days, previous to railways, as is well known the chief means of communication with the neighbouring towns was by the earrier. On one occasion, one of these—a Glenbervie man—was come upon by Mr Drummond, not far from the village. His cart was pretty heavily loaded, and had

stuck fast in a deep rut on the road. Do what he could the poor man could not get it out, but on coming up the minister sympathised very much with him, and better still, put his shoulder to the wheel. By their combined exertions the cart was soon set agoing. The carrier was most effusive in expressing his thanks to his reverence, and wound up his remarks in words, more forcible than polite, by saying—

“Deed, Maister Drummond, you are deevilish strong,” With a significant shake of the hand, and a slight look of disapprobation on his face the minister said, “Oh no sir, no, no, not so strong as him.”

The carrier in his attempt to tone down the force of his language, which he recognised as a little too strong, probably thought he had succeeded much better in expressing his admiration of the minister’s strength when he blurted out—“Weel then, Mr Drummond, you are d——d strong.” Evidently the carrier was woefully deficient in the relative force or meaning of certain words in the English language, but his *lapsus lingue* may be forgiven in his no doubt sincere desire to convey to the minister a well-earned compliment for the timely help he had thus afforded him.

#### A SHILLING AS GOOD AS TWO SIXPENCES.

In many rural parishes it is the rule to have only one service in church on Sunday, and this has always been the invariable custom in Glenbervie. On one occasion it was suggested to Mr Drummond that he should give two discourses instead of one, as was done in other parishes in the Presbytery. The minister did not give a direct reply to the suggestion, but taking out a shilling asked of his somewhat zealous clerical friend, if that was not as good as two sixpences, implying that his one sermon was as good as any two of his friend’s discourses.

#### “DUTY MODERATE.”

The old-fashioned plan of the minister going from house to house in his parish for the purpose of “catecheesiu” the parishioners has entirely been departed from. The Shorter Catechism was and indeed still is a standard manual in Glenbervie for the religious instruction of those of “weaker capacity.” Great store used to be set on the little book in the olden days, and Mr

Drummond was most anxious in seeing that each household in the parish was supplied with it. One day he called on a small shopkeeper in Drumlithie, Sandy Cant by name, to see if he had got a supply of the Catechism. "Oh yes," says the shopman, "here is a copy of Leitch's Catechisms with Scripture proofs, and I can sell them noo far cheaper than I used to do, ye sec the duty's reduced. This rather surprised the minister who remarked "You surely must be mistaken, there never was any duty put upon the catechism." "Excuse me minister ye're wrang, just look at the bottom of the title page on the Royal Arms and ye'll see there in black and white, "duty moderate." Such was Sandy's rendering of "*Dieu et mon droit*." The minister enjoyed a hearty laugh at the good man's rather free translation of the French motto.

#### THE WOODEN LEG.

On one occasion Mr Drummond had gone in to visit a person who had the misfortune to have lost one of his legs, a substitute being found in a wooden one which he possessed. The minister sat down and in the conversation which followed his eye lighted on the rafters of the house, where he espied what to all appearances was the chanter of a pair of bagpipes. "I see you are musical, William, ye play the bagpipes." "Na, na, Mr Drummond, was the man's reply, that's nae bagpipes ava, its just my Sabbath leg." The old man had thus provided himself with an extra one in case of emergency.

#### PROVIDING FOR SATAN.

In olden times it was customary for goodwives in the winter season to lay in a goodly supply of beef in case of a stress of weather or other causes rendering the usual regular supply unavailable. There were not then of course the same facilities for getting all kinds of goods delivered as there are to-day. The carrier's cart might be delayed by a storm, and in the more remote parts of the country the precaution was taken of "sawtin" such a quantity as would serve them for a considerable time. A local butcher, who was in the habit of supplying the occupants of the Manse with their supply of meat, conveyed to Mr Drummond the intimation that he had a "very nice piece of beef for *sawtin*"—the broad Scotch accent with which the message was delivered making the word

look like the old fashioned pronuneiation of the name Satan. "Tell the butcher," said the minister to his informant, "that we want none of his beef; we have enough to do with ourselves without providing for *Satan*: he can very well look after himself."

#### PREPARING FOR THE STORM.

When on a pastoral visitation one day, in the upper district of the parish, he called upon an old farmer who was in a very poor state, and who was expected not to live long. He spoke very tenderly to him, and advised him seriously to think of his great approaching change. When the minister had finished his kindly exhortation the patient looked up in his face and quietly remarked, "Ay Mr Drummond, I thaekit my hoose in the calm, and noo I am prepared for the storm."

#### BOTHERED WITH BEGGARS.

Of the present minister of the parish, Mr Gordon, we may be permitted to relate the following anecdote:—

Whilst on a round of visitation he had ocession to call on a certain old woman in the upper part of the parish. The old body had had her temper sorely tried that day by the repeated visits of beggars and tramps. Just before the minister had come up to her door she had turned off in hot haste one of the wandering fraternity, and was busy at the fireside doing some cooking. The minister on going up to the door, knocked, but imagine his surprise when he heard coming from the inside of the house—"Gae awa' hame wi' ye, I've ha'en plenty o' your kind the day." The good man had never received such a brusque salutation before, but nothing daunted he entered the old woman's dwelling with a smiling face, and inquired in his kindly way for her. The woman's feelings on seeing the reverend gentlemen, who she imagined would be another tramp, may be better imagined than described.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## AGRICULTURE.

No account of Glenbervie would be complete without a few words on its main industry—agriculture.

In the early part of the eighteenth century, and indeed much later, many parts of the parish were in a wild and uncultivated state. Probably then not much more than one-fourth of the parish was cultivated. Even at so comparatively recent a period as the beginning of the present century over eight thousand acres consisted of land unfit for tillage or hill; whilst other 1291 acres were considered as improveable, that is had recently been reclaimed. Still later, in 1830, according to the Statistical Account, "There are many acres in a wild state, but capable of cultivation. A considerable proportion of these may probably continue as they are, for a longer period than the progress of improvement elsewhere would lead us to infer."

The first half of the eighteenth century was a time of

## GREAT DEPRESSION

in agriculture. Besides local circumstances, adverse to the farming community, the century was remarkable for some very severe storms, which did great damage to crops.

The farmer had no great security to encourage him in agricultural enterprise. Highland raids were not uncommon and these led sometimes to great desolation. Glenbervie was almost in the direct line of march of these Highland freebooters and no doubt had suffered along with her neighbours from these depredations.

Apart from these considerations, farmers then were

## ILL EQUIPPED WITH IMPLEMENTS

that would do justice to the soil. The plough was a clumsy and awkward instrument, and was generally drawn by oxen. Towards the end of the Eighteenth Century there were over 50 ploughs in the parish. Forty years later there were over 70 "scientifically constructed, and of the most effective description." About 1790 there was not a thrashing-machine in the parish, whilst about 1830 there were 16. Indeed, previous to 1786 there were not above two or three in Scotland, and ten years later

they were introduced into the county, where they were very generally adopted although their great expense and the great power required to put them in motion limited the application of them to farming considerably.

Besides the lack of suitable implements, the county suffered also from proper

#### MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

Roads were ill-adapted and full of ruts. Riding or walking consequently formed the chief means of locomotion. The old turnpike passed through Glenbervie, and from it numerous bridle paths crossed both to the hills and the coast.

The storms of the century were remarkable. The years 1740 and 1782 stand out prominently in this respect. In the former year the frost was long and very intense, and vegetation consequently suffered severely. The latter year is known as the year of the

#### "SNAWY HAIRST."

A very small quantity of the crop only was secured, and what there was, was not of good quality. Glenbervie farmers seem to have suffered severely. The poor were reduced to great distress. The ground did not produce so much as would have maintained the inhabitants six months. In this and the following year, the Kirk Session, the universal provider for the poor in those days, applied nearly £140 stg. of their funds, in purchasing white pease and barley, in order to keep the poor from starvation, and to relieve the necessities of the other inhabitants. The poverty of the crops will be fully realised when we know that, in general, they were more than sufficient for the support of the inhabitants. The crops then grown were oats, bear, pease, potatoes, clover and rye-grass.

In very remote periods we have no reliable data on which to form an estimate of the state of agriculture, but we know that it must have been very rude. Up to a period subsequent to the last Jacobite rising in 1745, the principles of agriculture were very imperfectly understood. Even in such an advanced district as the Lothians this was so, and consequently in the Mearns and other distant counties we must conclude that agricultural knowledge and practice were less well understood. Nearly all the scientific principles with which the



agrieulturist is now familiar, and acts upon, had hardly begun to appear. Improvements in tillage operations, in agrieultural maekines and implements, the cultivation of our commoner crops such as turnips, potatoes, clover, and other artifieial grasses was in a manner totally unknown.

But whilst this was so, the

#### IMPROVEMENT OF THE COUNTRY

was beginning to exeite attention. Through the influence of the enlightened Cockburn of Ormiston a society was formed in East Lothian in 1736 for the improvement of agrieulture, and several gentlemen connected with the Mearns were members of it, one of these being the famous Lord Monboddo.

Indeed, it is pleasing to reflect that amid the general depression of the Eighteenth Century, efforts were being made in different direetions for the improvement of farms and farming. That bright band of agrieultural reformers included amongst others the famous Barclay of Ury, who more than any other exerted himself for the improvement of agrieulture, and whose example and influence made itself felt on the other landed proprietors of the county. In addition there were Silver of Netherley, Ramsay of Fasque, Burnett of Monboddo, and Sir William Nicolson of Glenbervie.

Of Sir William's work we shall presently speak, but a clearer idea will be got if we briefly indicate the nature of the work these public-spirited men earried out. These may best be spoken of under the following heads:—(1) Draining, (2) Trench ploughing, (3) removal and disposal of stones, (4) liming, (5) fencing, and (6) rotation of crops.

The need for

#### DRAINAGE

was great. The fields in many cases were wet swampy bogs, and frequently draining could not be earried out till ditches were formed a few yards from each other. The drains were generally two-and-a-half feet wide at the top, ten inches at the bottom, and about three feet deep. The drains were, of course, built of stones which were got from the fields. These were turned up by the trench plough, and so could be easily available not only for the building of drains, but also for dykes for fencing. The other object in trench ploughing was of course to acquire a greater depth of soil.

When the drainage, trench ploughing, and other operations had been completed, the operation of

#### LIMING

could be carried out. This was not on an extensive scale for the reason probably that it was difficult to get any considerable quantity transported, the roads being then so bad that it had to be carried in bags slung over the backs of horses from either Gourdon or Stonehaven.

The last, but by no means the least, of the many advances in agriculture initiated by the Mearns reformers was the

#### ROTATION OF CROPS.

That this was very imperfectly understood during the first half of the Eighteenth Century at least was only too evident. The conditions set out in some of the old leases bear evidence of this. In one it was said "there shall not be more than *five* crops of oats in succession. The practice of this *scourging* the land was sometimes carried much further. A farmer of the old school, said to have been a Glenbervie man, on being complimented on the goodness of his crop on a particular field said, "No wonder, it is only the *eighteenth* crop in succession since it got gudeing (manure)." Barelay, who had acquired his (for that time) advanced ideas on agriculture in the county of Norfolk, in England, was the main influence in advising others to carry them out, and that his example had induced the people of Glenbervie to follow it is attested thus by the Rev. Mr Thom, in the first Statistical Account:—"For the knowledge of these improvements, this county and neighbourhood, are principally, if not altogether, indebted to Mr Barelay of Urie, whose exertions in agriculture have been very great, and attended with success."

The particular improvement in agricultural practice to which Glenbervie can justly lay claim, was the introduction for the first time into the county of the practice of

#### RAISING HAY FROM SEEDS.

This was the work of Sir William Nicolson, described by an eminent writer of the early part of the present century, as a "spirited cultivator at an early period." This was about the year 1730, although the practice had been adopted in East

Lothian ten years previously by Lord Haddington.

Previous to this the only hay produced in the county was got from the natural meadows, which consisted in very many cases of undrained swamps and morasses. Whilst the "bloody Cumberland" was on his northward march in pursuit of the "Bonnie Prince Charlie" and his followers, it was from hay of this kind that his cavalry were supplied, and as the chapel at Drumlithie was burned then by his men, it is just possible that he had availed himself of whatever fodder could be got in the parish for his horses. It must have been but miserable feeding at the best, and often cost a deal of labour to procure.

The following extract will explain Sir William's method:—

"He was the first person in the Mearns who raised hay from seeds; not, however, from the seeds of any of the species of clover now in use, but from such seeds as were found among the natural meadow hay. Neither was the land put into that fine tilth that arises from the cultivation of turnip, or summer fallow; for these modes of preparation were not then known here. But he sowed his seeds among oats of the third or fourth crop from ley. And the produce was so far good, at least, as to excite the astonishment of his neighbours. It must indeed have been very much superior to the then usual method of leaving the land to renew its herbage, as it best could, without aid from seeds of any kind."

This new method of Sir William's was not, perhaps, of so great moment in itself, but it pointed out the way to others to still further improve the hay crop, and had several very beneficial indirect results. In fact, it marked the commencement of a "new departure" in the agriculture of the county. Not merely did these artificial grasses furnish a new and better relished supply of food for cattle, but, requiring as they did, a more improved method of cultivation, they forced on the farmer a more correct and thorough method of cultivation, in order to get his lands into the fine tilth and higher state of perfection, without which they will not prosper. Thus, whilst a more luxuriant crop of grass was obtained, the soil itself was rendered more productive for the succeeding crops. Although Glenbervie led the way in this, it does not appear that the practice of sowing clover or other artificial grasses was general over the county till about 1760. Indeed, it was ten years after that date till it was in general use amongst the tenants. From that time the culture of these

grasses extended rapidly, until about the beginning of the present century, when the total amount sown out in grasses was 28,641 acres, or nearly two-fifths of all the lands in cultivation.

About the same time as the cultivation of grasses became general, another source of food supply for cattle, viz. turnips, was introduced into the Mearns. These two circumstances form a remarkable stage in the history of agriculture in the county, and serve to show that amidst the general depression which marked the Eighteenth Century, there were at least some new and improved means of supply available to farmers which not only demanded a higher state of cultivation, but also reacted beneficially on the rearing and health of the farmers' stock.

#### IRRIGATION

or watering of the land is a practice now entirely abandoned amongst us. It is said to have been pretty prevalent in the county during the Eighteenth Century. It was carried out by Sir William Nicolson in the year 1740, and in this particular method of agriculture is said to have been very successful. A writer of the period gives information and opinion on the practice, "All I have been able to learn on this subject is, that about the year 1740, Sir William Nicolson of Glenbervie, flooded land for corn, as well as for grass, and was very successful in both. That irrigation was afterwards pretty generally diffused over the face of the country, and continued almost to the present day. I have myself seen several trenches of considerable length at least more than a mile, for the purpose of conducting water to flood a favourite field. How this practice came to be exploded, I have never heard satisfactorily accounted for. Perhaps lime, the present idol of agriculturists, has, in this respect, had its influence. Yet though that manure is found to be highly beneficial, the watering of land ought not to have been abandoned. There is room enough and to spare for both modes of melioration. Should the disuse of irrigation have proceeded merely for caprice, there is room to hope that it may again be revived, from the same principle that we have lately seen the exploded square-toes of a former age become again fashionable in this."

Glenbervie in more modern times can lay claim to another distinction in connection with agriculture. It gives its name to the famous

“GLENBERVIE EARLY”

potato. This variety has enjoyed a splendid reputation during the last fifty years or thereby, and is yet acknowledged as a leading favourite even amidst the keen competition for public favour of the ever-increasing number of varieties of this useful vegetable. It was “brought out” by Mr David Gairns, gardener for long at Glenbervie House. Mr Gairns was an enthusiastic and successful gardener, and gained many prizes both for flowers and fruits at the leading shows in the district. In his time the varieties of potatoes were more limited than now, when scarcely a year passes without seeing one or more new kinds sprung on the attention of growers. The “Glenbervie Early” was not long in establishing itself in public favour as a desirable potato, and although the original character of the variety is no doubt now considerably altered, nevertheless it retains, especially in the north-eastern counties, a foremost place in public esteem.

In the early part of the century the “White Kidney” was mostly planted. Robertson in his “Agricultural Survey” states that the kind most commonly planted was “a round sort, of a darkish colour, not to be easily distinguished from the earth in which it grows. It has a coarse and hardy appearance, but is very hardy and prolific.”

It was said to be a good “keeper.” This was probably the “Regent” variety. Later in the century the leading varieties were “Duffs,” “Dons,” “Leather Coats” (a very suggestive name) “Blue Kidneys” and the “Large” and “Small Americans.”

The names of varieties cultivated now are legion. The “Champion” still does its best to justify its name, although run hard by many others, the outcome of systematic and often scientific treatment. Half a century ago the terrible “blight” that befel the potato crop proved a serious calamity to the whole country. This was looked upon by many as a “dispensation” from Heaven, but which probably proved in the end to be a blessing in disguise. There can be no doubt that it turned men’s thoughts to more scientific treatment in the culture of potatoes than had hitherto obtained, and to a more careful and judicious selection of seed potatoes.

Thus, what was looked upon as a great disaster and a public calamity, in the end was beneficial to

the potato crop; and every student of modern history knows that in the case of Ireland (where it first appeared) it ultimately had wider and more far-reaching effects—effects felt to the present day—than the improvement in the culture and selection of the potato.

It is amusing to us to read in the light of our fuller knowledge and experience, the first attempts at potato growing in the county. Marykirk had the honour of leading the way in this. The good people of Marykirk to-day are an enlightened, honest, and in many respects ingenious community, but if we are to believe the description here quoted from *Robertson's Survey*, these qualities must be of comparatively recent growth:—"In Kincardineshire this useful plant was first cultivated, about the year 1727, in the village of Marykirk, by an old soldier, who had acquired the knowledge of it, together with some roots in his possession, from his peregrinations in Ireland. He lived, here, however, only a single season. And although the villagers were ready enough to steal his crop, none of them had the ingenuity to cultivate it after he was gone. They would, indeed, look long in vain for the seed from the stems. This circumstance I relate on the testimony of a respectable farmer, whose grandfather stated it as having happened when he was a boy there at school."

When they were again introduced in 1760—about forty years later—they were accounted of so much value as to be considered on a level in value with apples and pears, and were as sparingly dealt out then as apples and oranges would be now at a children's Christmas party.

At the beginning of the present century there were only 50 acres under cultivation out of a total of 1160 acres in the whole county. The average price then was close upon £2 10s per ton, and the average produce was about 24 Kincardineshire bolls or six tons the English acre. After home wants had been supplied the surplus was taken either to Aberdeen or Montrose.

To-day there is no vegetable more relished and more assiduously cultivated than the potato, and although Glenbervie is not a "potato country" in the same sense that many parishes further down the Howes of the Mearns and Strathmore, and along the coast are yet as evidenced by the magnificent display of potatoes at the annual horticultural



exhibition and other proofs, the people of Glenbervie to-day are as enthusiastic as ever to uphold the character they have acquired for skill in the growth of this beneficial and useful plant.

To conclude our short account of the agricultural history of Glenbervie a brief estimate as between the past and the present may be here made.

The period of the union of the Parliaments of England and Scotland (1707) may be taken as the dawn of the revival of agriculture in Scotland. That union at first strenuously opposed, and declared to be the precursor of many evils for Scotland was in reality the beginning of an era in which progress in material wealth and prosperity was conjoined with a decided and beneficent progress in many of the industrial arts. In that general improvement, agriculture shared. England was at this time far ahead of Scotland in the practice of agriculture, and from England many improvements in agricultural methods and practice were brought home by the legislators whose parliamentary duties now called them to the southern capital. Amongst the early improvers of our agricultural practices we may mention the famous Cockburn of Ormiston, the member for Haddingtonshire, Thomas, sixth Earl of Haddington, Lord Belhaven, Lord Kames and others in the south of Scotland, whilst mention has already been made of the famous Barclay of Ury and the other Kincardineshire lairds who followed his enlightened example. The improvement during the first half of the Eighteenth Century was indeed slow, nor is this to be wondered at when the circumstances of the times and other hindering conditions are taken into account. But the close of the century brought with it a new order of things. The seeds sown by the agricultural reformers were yet to be wakened into a new and more vigorous life. A blast from the continent reached men's ears. That blast was the sound of the French Revolution which in 1789 convulsed France, and startled the other nations of Europe. To this day its effects are being felt. Men's minds and energies were stirred by this momentous event, and in 1793 Britain was drawn into the great Napoleonic wars which for more than twenty years desolated a great part of Europe, and only ended with the defeat of Napoleon and all his ambitious plans on the bloody field of Waterloo. These wars gave an extraordinary al-

though unhealthy stimulus to agriculture. Prices, owing to deficient harvests and the prohibitions of Napoleon, rose to an enormous height. After the peace of 1814 prices fell. A period of comparative depression followed, but the outbreak of the Crimean War again produced a revival of agricultural prosperity, and the value of land consequently rose. At present, and for a considerable time past, agriculture has been in a depressed condition, the causes of which we do not attempt to explain, although there can be no doubt they are many and far-reaching. If it be true that history repeats itself a revival of agricultural prosperity will assuredly come. Remedial measures for the relief of agriculture may have to be passed by the legislature, but meantime it seems most advisable for all concerned to exercise a sympathetic and practical interest and forbearance towards each other till the sun of prosperity shall again shine on the most important of our industries—agriculture.

As one stands by the sea shore and watches the advancing and receding waves, it may be difficult to know whether the tide is ebbing or flowing. But in spite of the present low ebb in the agricultural stream there can be no denying the fact that to-day in respect of agricultural practice and conditions of life and work we stand far ahead of our ancestors who lived in the "good old times." The culture and conditions of all plant life on the farm are better understood; rotation of crops is steadily and systematically pursued; the application of artificial manures to the soil is regarded as part of good husbandry; the rearing and breeding of stock is better understood; our implements and machines of all kinds are now in a very high state of perfection; housing whether for master, servant, or stock is infinitely superior to what it was; the standard of comfort and style of living are on a higher level; education is more generally diffused; and general intelligence in both master and servant better developed than in the past.

But there are always two sides to the shield. Whilst what we have above stated is no doubt true of the agricultural community, it is to be regretted that there has been along with it a gradual removal of much that was eminently desirable and attractive in the past. On good authority we are told that there was a very

common sentiment and community of feeling between master and servant ; that there was a zealous desire to work in a common interest ; that there was a spirit of reverence and respect for both the Kirk and the Sabbath. These and other laudable features marked the past. We could wish that there were more of them now. The unsettling tendencies of the present age have permeated into the heart of the agricultural classes, and destroyed in them much that was for their own advantage. With the experience of the past before them, and the observation of what is before them at present, it may be hoped that they will in the future graft on to their daily life and work all that has been proved to be beneficial to them and theirs in the past. The wish expressed by the immortal Burns in his noble poem, "The Cottar's Saturday Night" may, with even greater force than in his day, be here uttered, and with it we conclude our short account of the agricultural history of the parish :

" Oh Scotia, my dear my native soil !  
 For whom my warmest wish to heaven is sent !  
 Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil  
 Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content !  
 And O ! may heaven their simple lives prevent  
 From luxury's contagion, weak and vile !  
 Then, however crowns and coronets be rent,  
 A virtuous populace may rise the while,  
 And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved isle."



Robt. Burns

## CHAPTER XVII.

GLENBERVIE—THE NORTHERN “LAND OF BURNS”—  
THE BURNS’ MONUMENTS IN GLENBERVIE CHURCH-  
YARD—THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME BURNES—THE  
SOCIAL POSITION OF THE BURNESSES—THEIR  
CHARACTER.

That Glenbervie was the cradle of the family of Burns is one of the outstanding facts in the history of the parish. While it fills the natives of the district with pride, it invests Glenbervie with a world-wide interest, in which the whole of the Mearns and part of Angus have a share. The investigations of the past forty-five or fifty years have, through various channels, been made known, but their results have not been generally realised. Who, even amongst students of Burns, ever dreams of associating him with the Bervie and the Carron, with Carmount and Inchbreck, with Knockhill and the old churchyard of Glenbervie? Are they even familiar with the names of these hills and streams?

Speak of Burns, and nine out of ten of his countrymen will at once turn to Ayr, and the “auld clay biggin’” in which he was born; to Mount Oliphant, Lochlea, Mossgiel, and Ellisland; to Mauchline, Irvine, Kirkoswald, Kilmarnock, and Dumfries. They picture him musing by the gurgling Ayr and Doon, or wandering in creative mood by the more majestic Nith. For Glenbervie House they see Coilsfield, and for Drum-lithie Tarbolton. In short, few pilgrims to the “Land of Burns” ever think of any other part of Scotland than that which lies in the southern counties of Ayr and Dumfries. They may have heard but know nothing of another Land of Burns, lying at the head of Strathmore, under the shadow of the towering Grampians.

It is impossible, and it certainly is not here intended, to break the bond between Burns and the district which claims him in virtue of birth, life, death, and abounding monumental memorials. His songs are mainly of the South, and there he found his many heroines, the subjects of his character vignettes, and the materials for his fascinating works in poetical *genre*. In virtue of his ancestry, the generations of at least two centuries, he nevertheless belongs to Glenbervie.

None of Burns’ earlier biographers makes any allusion to the subject of his northern descent.

Even Scott Douglas, with Dr Burnes' "Notes on his name and family" before him, treats the matter very slightly. That little volume, printed in 1851, was unfortunately only issued for private circulation. It is, in consequence, very little known and still hides in its original obscurity. The facts were circulated more widely by Dr Charles Rogers. In the first place, he issued in 1877 his "Genealogical Memoir of the Family of Robert Burns." In the second place, and in a very effective manner, he attracted general attention to Burns' connection with Glenbervie, by the part he took in the ceremony of handing over to the heritors the restored tombstones of sundry ancestors of the poet, whose neglected graves were discovered in the parish churchyard.

This most picturesque and solemn of Homes of the Dead is situated on a plateau near a finely wooded bend in the Bervie, and under the dark shadow of Knockhill, within two miles of Drum-lithie, and within bowshot of the Parish Church. It is bounded upon one side by the approach to the Manse, by which it is overlooked, and on the other side, at the foot of the slope, by a brattling burn, which runs cheerily past the gloomy spot to join the Bervie. A few miles away, towards the North, are the Braes of Glenbervie upon the southern slope of an outlying spur of the Grampians. From the highroad leading past the front of the Parish Kirk, known as the Brae Road, between two and three miles northwards, and before dipping down into the western section of the valley of the Carron, three farms can be surveyed—Brawlinmuir or Brawliemuir, Bogjorgan and Bogherb—which were held by those when in life who now slumber in the Parish God's Acre.

These farms form part of the estate of Inchbreck, for many generations a possession of the family of Alexander Stuart, Esq., of Laithers, Turriff. Between the Braes of Glenbervie and the Bervie water, and from Droop Hill eastward along the sloping sides of Carmount—including the farms of Inches, Elfhill, Hawkhill, Kinmonth, and Clochanhill or Clochnahill—there is not a rood of ground without its association with the Ayrshire peasant poet. The district indicated is the nursery of the race of Burnes or Burns.

Dr James Burnes and Adam Burnes, sons of Provost Burnes, Montrose, visited the churchyard



about forty years ago (*circa* 1850-55), and found the graves of their and the poet's ancestors almost hidden under soil and an overgrowth of grass, moss, and weeds, and the stones placed over them fast crumbling to decay. Two flat or *thorough* stones rested upon the soil. One bore the dates 1715 and 1719, and marked the resting-place of William Burnes, tenant in Bogjorgan, great-granduncle of the poet, and his wife, Christian Fotheringham; the other commemorated James Burnes, tenant in Bralinmuir, and his wife, Margaret Falconer, the great-grandparents of Burns. The latter stone was lying upon its face. Upon being turned over it was found to bear, under the conventional death's head the following inscription:—

## MEMENTO MORI.

17-42.

J. B.

Here under lyes the body of JAMES BURNES, who was Tenant in Bralinmuir, who died ye 23 of January, 1743. Aged 87 years.

M. F.

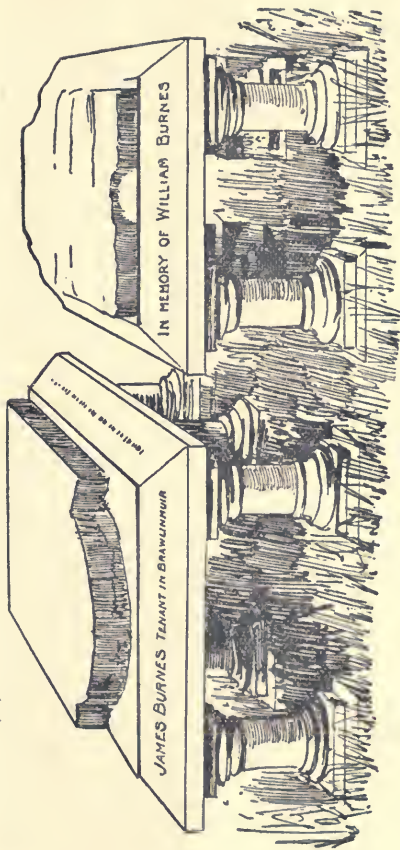
Also the body of MARGARET FALCONER, his spouse, who departed this life the 28th of Dec., 1749, aged 90 years.

Although our bodys worms destroy—our reins consumed be,  
Yet in our flesh and with our eyes Shall our Redeemer See.

Here is the grave of Thomas Burnes son to the above, who departed this life June ye 8, 1734, aged 29 years. Also his lawful and only daughter, Margaret, who departed this life March ye 24th, 1741, aged 8 years.

For many years after the visit of the Montrose Burneses, "decay's effacing fingers" were allowed to carry on the process of obliteration. At length, and only a few years ago, a committee was formed, under the secretaryship of Mr J. B. Greig, banker, Laurencekirk, in order to take steps to arrest the further progress of elemental disintegration. Funds were raised, sufficient to erect two sandstone cradles resting upon pedestals, in which the original stones were encased. Unfortunately, being simply laid flat in the cradles prepared for their reception, the stones are even more exposed to every atmospheric agency than when lying upon the ground, partially protected by debris and herbage.

The ceremony referred to took place upon 25th June, 1885, and many of the words then spoken are well worthy of preservation. As proprietor of Inchbreck, Mr Stuart said that he esteemed it a high and great honour still to hold the bit of land on which the race of Burns first saw the light, and he hoped that



BURNS' ANCESTORS' TOMBSTONES IN GLENBERVIE CHURCHYARD.

the memory of the family would never die out of their native neighbourhood. It was fit and proper that the tombstones of the forbears of a great man should not be allowed to disappear under foot, but should be preserved for all future ages.

Upon the same lines, but going further, Mr Greig reached the real core of the matter viz., the character and quality of the forefathers of the poet. Burns' being no evanescent fame, he felt that such memorials in the Mearns as were associated with his name would be of interest to their children's children, and were well deserving of their reverent care. Such glimpses as they had of the old race were attractive. They seem to have been "bawsint" men—firm strung, of keen insight, sparing of speech, not easily "shot aboot," dour but not vengeful, and with a high conception of the possibilities of life. Minding sednulously their own affairs, they did not allow their private concerns to bound their view; the right was the right though the "lift should fa'." To such men in those troublous times the tragedy of life brought many and great vicissitudes, and such natures and their traditions were a heritage of the Bard. Can we doubt that he heard much of what his ancestors were, of their gladness, of their sorrow, of their sharp variances, of their deep affections, of their stout contentions for the causes they espoused, and of their chequered fates?

The reference to the heritage of Burns brings up the subject of heredity which has here a threefold interest. It gives practical value to an otherwise purposeless genealogical inquiry, and point to an otherwise bootless historical research. It weaves together the several strands of the bond which binds Burns to the North, and affords solid ground for a plea on behalf of the Mearns to be conceded a foremost place in the production and poetical equipment of the National Bard. It lends something more than plausibility to a contention that there is a far closer affinity between Burns and the men o' the Mearns than ever could have existed between him and the "wabsters" of Kilmarnock, the pawky men of Ayr, or the slander-mongering townsmen of Dumfries.

At this point, the view taken by Dr Rogers may be introduced. It is worthy of being read with care. He says:—

"That Robert Burns was, in respect of his great powers, directly indebted to his ancestors may not be affirmed. Neither may we venture to assert that he arose in a soil which had no preparation. So to speak would be to substitute for providential pre-arrangement the government of chance. As in the meadow there are spots more especially efflorescent, and which produce plants odorous and honey-laden, so from certain races, or certain combinations of races, descend those who by their thought and activities tend to renovate and enoble. . . . I, for one, incline to believe the strong influence of heredity. Like oil on water, mental power rises to the surface, and though beclouded for generations will emerge and assert itself."

The theory of the learned genealogist goes far towards restoring Burns to the Mearns, and to the home of his forefathers, the Burneses of Glenbervie. It may not yet, perhaps, be thoroughly understood how close Burns stood to his northern kindred. His maternal ancestry will be briefly adverted to presently, but on the paternal side—and the words that follow are likely to prove a hard saying to many—Robert Burns was the first of his race to be claimed by the South and that in virtue of birth alone and not of blood. His grandfather was born, lived, and died in the Mearns, and his father, William Burnes, had already reached man's estate when about 1748-49 he left Clochnahill, his father's farm, on the southern slope of Carmount, for Edinburgh and Ayrshire.

Before closing his address at Glenbervie, Dr Rogers spoke very decidedly upon the subject. He suggested that Burns might not have been the patriotic poet he was had he not derived his being from a race who transmitted to their descendant the love of country and of kind. For his own part, he strongly held that, while genius is meteoric and underived, its direction is under the guidance of example and heredity.

As if entirely to sever Burns' more or less accidental connection with the South, although for about a century-and-a-quarter his maternal ancestors can be traced along the coast of Ayrshire, they were originally Celtic, and, according to Dr Rogers, were speaking Gaelic within half-a-century of the poet's birth. Assuming the natives of the Mearns to have

been Scandinavian, Dr Rogers thus eloquently speaks of the parents of Burns :—

“The union of the two races of Saxon and Celt in his house first occurred by the marriage of William Burnes and Agnes Brown—a union of which the first issue appeared on the 25th January, 1759, when the great minstrel was born. Might we not poetically say that in that birth was provided the keystone of an arch, of which one pillar rested on the rocks of Carrick, and the other on the wild, rough shores of Bervie and Dunnottar?”

As to the origin of the Burneses or their first arrival in the Mearns, nothing is known with certainty. A story gained credence for a time in some quarters that they are descended from an Argyllshire fugitive who, on arriving in the Mearns, took the name of Burnhouse from a property he held in his county of origin. That name is supposed to have been in course of time corrupted and to have assumed several different forms—Burnes, Burness, Burnas, Burnasse, Burnace, and others. The tale has no foundation in either direct or indirect testimony, and all the presumptive evidence is against it.

Dr James Burnes in his “Notes” goes into a lengthy dissertation upon cognate Norman and English names, but in the genealogical chain of his weaving there is a missing link which he never forged. He did not succeed in connecting the Norman and English bearers of similar names with the Burneses of Glenbervie. The hiatus is not to be regretted. It would have been incongruous and at variance with the fitness of things had it proved that the singer of “Scots wha ha’e” was by descent an Englishman.

Dr Rogers has departed from his earlier theories, and his latest position gains strength from its common-sense and direct simplicity. Bruce granted a charter in which Bernis appears as a placename in the thanedom of Aberbuthnott—afterwards Marykirk. Bernis was afterwards called Burnhouse and Bernes, and similar designations appear in other parts of Scotland. “The appellative,” says Dr Rogers, “pointed to proximity to a burn or small stream.” The adoption of a territorial name by a family is by no means uncommon. As a place called Bernis existed in Marykirk early in the fourteenth century, there is

nothing more likely than that its owner or occupier assumed the name of his lands.

From Marykirk to Glenbervie is a mere step, and in the sixteenth century (1547) when the Stuarts acquired Inehbreck from Sir Alexander Douglas of Glenbervie, they found Burneses upon the roll of tenants. It is, accordingly, quite possible that the Inehbreck branches belonged to the Marykirk stem, but the assumption is not a genealogical necessity. Jervise, at all events, mentions two charters by King Robert the Bruce, granting lands in Glenbervie named alternatively Bernes and Bernis, and subsequently known as Burnhouse of Kair. From these the Glenbervie Burneses may have taken their name. Its origin is, however, purely speculative. Its earliest form appears to have been Burnes. The poet spelled it Burness for a time, and ultimately settled upon Burns. Burness was the form usually adopted in Kincardineshire in the early part of the 18th century and probably before that time. In the Kirk-Session Records of Glenbervie the name is invariably spelled Burness.

The tradition of an Argyllshire root, advanced by John Burness, author of "Thrummy Cap" and other poems, elicited from Dr James Burnes, the following letter addressed to William Burness, Stonehaven, in which a new theory is started:—

"MONTROSE, [date eaten by mice].

"DEAR SIR,—In consequence of some reference having been made to my grandfather and our family in Allan Cunningham's late life of Burns the poet, I lately addressed a letter to the session clerk of Glenbervie, requesting him to consult the registers of the parish regarding our forefathers. It appears, however, that the registers were destroyed at the Rebellion; but the session clerk, as you will observe by one of the enclosed letters, informs me that you possess papers likely to elucidate the subject; and I therefore beg the favour of your sending me any information you may possess. It is not improbable that your information is the same as that contained in the accompanying letter from Mr John Burness of Stonehaven\* to my father Provost Burnes of Montrose. If so, I have strong reason to believe that the origin of the name there given is incorrect, as a law document is still in existence granting a respite to Johnne Burness, and others, for the [piece mice-eaten] of the Earl of Caithness, and dated S[tirling], September, 1528, in the reign of King James the 5th, no less than 165 years before the Revolution referred to by Mr John Burness. The Johnne Burness alluded to in the respite was in all probability an Orkney man. It is more likely, therefore, that the name was originally derived from Burness, the name of a parish in the Orkneys. Perhaps you could obtain some information for me respecting such of the family



as are in the parish of Dunnottar. [Here follow instructions respecting copying of manuscript, etc.]

"I remain, Dear Sir,

"Yours truly,

"JAMES BURNES, M.D.,

"*Bombay Army.*

MR. WILLIAM BURNES,  
STONKHAVEN."

\* The author of "Thrummy Cap," etc.

From this letter it would seem that Dr Burnes inclined at that time to the belief that the name was Orcadian.

One John Burnes makes his appearance in 1637 as chamberlain to Sir Alexander Strachan of Thornton. A little later, 26th August, 1659, Patrick Burnes subscribes an instrument as clerk to the Presbytery of Brechin. After that date members of the family, spelling their common surname in all sorts of quaint fashions, appear in the local registers of various contiguous parishes.

In connection with their dispersal Dr Rogers says:—

"In the parish register of Arbuthnot is the following entry:—'At the Kirk of Arbuthnot, the 27th of August, 1633, the said day Robert Burnes presentit ane child to be baptizit called Robert. Witness thereto Robert Krow in Parkhead.' This Robert Krow or Crow after whom the child was named seems to have derived his name from his landlord, Sir Robert Arbuthnott. Thus was the Christian name of Robert introduced into the Burnes family. Robert Burnes, the child baptised at Arbuthnott in 1633, is in the register of that parish described, in June, 1655, when he married Elizabeth Wise. as residing in Glenbervie. As the parish registers of Glenbervie are non-existent prior to 1721, and the marriage register prior to 1747, we cannot trace the actual succession of Robert Burnes and his wife, Elizabeth Wise."

James Burnes, the poet's great-grandfather, the inscription from whose tombstone is given above, was in his earlier life, lessee of one half of Bogjorgan. He thereafter became tenant of Bralinmuir. His son Robert took the farm of Kiumouth in Glenbervie, and afterwards that of Clochnahill in Dunnottar. He married Isabella Keith of Criggie, a farm adjoining Clochnahill, and had ten sons and daughters, of whom William, born 11th November, 1727, was the father of Robert Burns.

It is unnecessary to go further. Speculating until Doomsday would carry us no nearer the truth regarding the beginning of the family and the derivation of the name. Suffice it to know that

there were Burneses in Glenbervie in 1547; that after a blank of more than a century the firm ground of history is reached with the birth, in 1656, of James Burnes, the great-grandfather of the poet; and that there were Burneses on Bralinnmuir down to 1807, when the farm passed from David Burnes to John Kennedy. Bogjorgan went out of the family on the death of the third William in 1784.

A great deal of speculation has been indulged in by Dr Rogers and others as to the part taken by the Burneses in the Jacobite risings of 1715 and 1745. The subject takes us away from Glenbervie, and it may be dismissed with the curt statement that the hypothesis that they—particularly Burns' father and uncles—fought for Prince Charlie is not only unsupported by any evidence, but is surrounded by improbabilities. That the poet's father had no share in the rising of 1745 is virtually certain. Gilbert mentions "his possession of a parish certificate bearing that he, William Burnes took no part in the "late wicked rebellion." To assume that a man of his integrity, rigid religious belief, and staunch moral principle would carry about with him written testimony to a lie would be both outrageous and preposterous in reference to him of whom his greater son wrote:—

"The pitying heart that felt for human woe,  
The dauntless heart that fear'd no human pride;  
The friend of man—to vice alone a foe."

Of greater immediate interest than either Jacobitism or descent is the social position of the Burneses. The most exaggerated statements have been made upon this subject, the best method of combatting which is to state ascertained truth. Their farms were not rich and fertile like those of the Carse of Gowrie, the Howe of Fife, or the Lothians. Returning to the Brae Road the land on either side suggests comparatively recent reclamation. On the right or east of the road, not far from the Parish Kirk, is Inches, once in the possession of one of the Burneses, and further north the suggestive place-names of Backfield, Cotbank, and Skeltygibb are encountered. Once fairly over the back of the Brae and only a few hundred yards in front is the road leading past Bogjorgan and Elfhill to Stonehaven. In the time of the Burneses the whole country side must have been wild and uncultivated. Even the names are suggestive of wet and unpro-

ductive land—Bogjorgan, Bogherb, Brawlinmuir, Moor of Germany, Moss-side, Moss-head. These and many others point to the original character of the soil, which be it said to the credit of both laird and tenant, has during the last half-century been brought under cultivation in a wonderful and praiseworthy manner.

The original farmhouse of Bogjorgan consisted of one room divided by a wooden partition into two compartments. It had open rafters, and a thatched roof. The description given by Robertson in his "Agricultural Survey of Kincardineshire," gives a fair idea of the furniture commonly found in the old-fashioned Mearns cottages. "The furniture of a Mearns Cottage," he says, "consists, in general, of two close wooden beds, which are so arranged as to make a separation between two apartments; one or two wooden chests for holding clothes: a cask or "girnall" for holding meal; a set of dairy utensils; an iron pot or two for cooking the victuals; a girdle or heating iron, for toasting the bread; and a few dishes, some of wood and some of stoneware; two or three chairs or stools; and a press or cupboard for holding the crockery ware, and the bread, the cheese, the butter, and at times the whisky bottle."

Chambers, in his life and works of Robert Burns, gives a copy of the inventory of the home steading of Bogjorgan at the time of the separation (1705) of William and James Burnes, sons of the first William. At that time James took Inches and William remained at Bogjorgan. It is a very interesting document, and from its quaint phraseology and abundance of detail, is here given entire:—

"Anc note of the biging off Bogjorgine, belonging to William Stnart, heritor thereof, given up be William Burnasse, present tenant of the s<sup>d</sup> rowm, and James Burnasse, late possessor of the half thereof, upon the seventainth day of July, 1705 years."

"Imp (a ffyr) housse, consisting of three couples, flour horses, two tail postes, one middle wall with one post ffrom the ground, with one rooff, two pares in the syd, with one door bandet, locked, and bared, and with one window off two lightes, bandet, bandet, and sacked, with one loume, all to be sufficient."

"Item, one barne, consisting of ffve couples, four horses, two tailpostes, one rooff, thrie pares in the s<sup>d</sup>, with ffor door locked, and bandet, and back door bared and steepled, all to be sufficient."

"Item, ane byre, consisting of four couplles, two in the syd, ane roof, with door and door cheikes bandet, all to be sufficient."

"It is declared be both parties that if ther be no other inventur ffound betwixt this and Whytsonday nixt, 1706 years, that this shall be ane tr(ue) inventur off the said William Burness at his removell from the said room. In witness . . . beffer these witnesses—Robt. Middletoun in Broombank, and David Watson in Polburn, wryter hereof.

"R. MIDLESTONE, witnes.

WILL STUART,

"D. WATSON, wittnes  
and wryter.

1705,

W. B.

There is in existence a similar inventory of Bralinmuir and Inchbreck. The former lies to the west of Bogjorgan, and was occupied by Burns' great-grandparents. The inventory is dated 1759, the year of the poet's birth. The following is the part applicable to Bralinmuir:—

Inp.—The Dwelling-House Walls, wh. stone midd-wall valued at Eighteen Pounds Scots.....	}	£18 0 0
The Roof and Door of sd. House, valued at Nineteen Pounds Scots....		
2d.—The Barn walls valued at fifteen pounds Scots.....	}	£15 0 0
The Roof Doors &c. of sd. Barn valued at fifteen Pounds and one merk Scots..		

Sum total of Brawlinmoor sixty seven Pounds and one merk Scots.....	}	£67 13 4

It thus appears that Bogjorgan consisted of a dwelling-honse, barn, and byre, and that the first of these had only one room, divided by a middle wall, one door and one window. A middle-class farmer of to-day would consider it little better than a hovel. Its estimated value is not stated, but the dwelling-honse and barn at Bralinmuir are appraised at a little more than a five-pound note in sterling money! Another circumstance pointing in the same direction is that under the will of James Burnes of Bralinmuir the sum total of the bequests does not amount to more than about £25 sterling. The Burneses, in fact, had neither wealth nor position. They were farmers of the humbler sort. They had, at times, a hard struggle to live. They were not rarely called upon to meet the raids of Highland caterans; they sowed and reaped in no climatic Paradise; and both cold and stubborn was the land they tilled upon the

braes. But inured to the struggle for life, they were strong men, unyielding, determined, courageous, and impervious to the despair that follows the weakling's defeat. A great deal of their lives and character may be read in those of William Burnes the poet's father. That they were industrious and honest men is shown by their continuance upon Inchbreck for upwards of two-and-a-half centuries. They clung close to each other, clustering round the anoestral farms upon Inchbreck, and were probably clannish. They may not have been rich but they were men of honour, intelligence and strict integrity. None of the Burneses of Glenbervie was ever compelled to travel far in quest of a farm, and no landlord ever parted with a Burnes except at his tenant's request. Such were the men who may be chosen as types of the older inhabitants of Glenbervie.

And now, courteous reader, our labour of love is ended; our tale is told; our picture drawn; our garment woven. We doubt not that the tale is incomplete; the picture blurred and marred by many imperfections; the garment rough and uncouth. But let it be remembered that the materials also were rough and incomplete. The picture we place before you with all its defects; the garment we lay open to your inspection. If we have in any way aided another to tell a better tale, to paint a fairer picture or weave a more artistic garment, we shall not have laboured in vain. That this will be done yet we doubt not. A more cunning hand and a more skilful workman will yet gather up our tangled threads, and weave them with others into a vesture of more delicate and lovely proportions. We have written it with the *heart* as all work of a like kind should be, and if it should in any wise induce others either to read or to write of, "the lowly train in life's sequestered scene" we shall be satisfied. In words slightly altered from those of the great Bard whose spirit still animates us to-day, we conclude:—

"A wish—I mind its power,  
A wish that to my latest hour  
Shall strongly heave my breast;  
That I, for dear Glenbervie's sake,  
Some simple plan or book should make,  
Or sing a sang at least."

## *E R R A T A .*

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Page 2. For ' Kinghorny ' read ' Arbuthnott.'—  
This correction of Jervise is made on the authority  
of Rev. R. M. Spence, Arbuthnott, who furnished  
the author with an extract copy of Dr Arbuthnott's  
baptismal certificate.

Page 10. For ' Ireland ' read ' the Tyrol.'

Page 91. For ' And my name is ' read ' Than I.'











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